

Week ending January 12 1957

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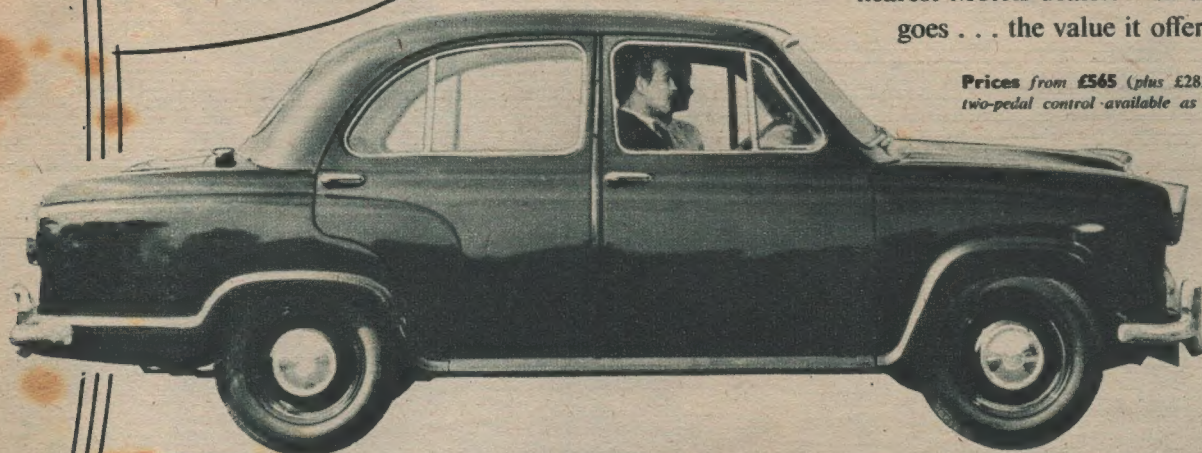
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TEMPLE BAR 2468 JANUARY 12, 1957 VOLUME 101 NUMBER 2637

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR



Al Dewlen—a Texan who loves the old Wild West

IF Al Dewlen, author of our new serial *Stranger In The Street*, had his way he would probably choose to live in the wild, lawless period of his novel. He is an expert on America's pioneer days and has a deep-rooted interest in Texas, its way of life, its past and its people. "I've even married a glamorous Texan girl," he says. They have two sons who are more interested in learning baseball and football from their father than playing cowboys and Indians.

Dewlen was born in Memphis, Texas, thirty-eight years ago. During the war he was in the U.S. Marine Corps and then became a newspaperman—in Texas. "I was also trying to sell short stories,"

he says, "but unsuccessfully. Finally I decided to lash out at fiction writing, make or bust."

He took his wife and the one son they then had to Oklahoma and wrote *Stranger In The Street*. Already the novel has been a book club choice in America and chosen for reprinting in a cheap edition. The film rights have been sold. Reviewers have called it "an outstanding suspense novel of the old West," and "a true representation of that lawless period."

Dewlen is now working on a novel about an oilman—who, of course, hails from Texas. At his home in Amarillo, Texas, which the family shares with two dogs and a cat, he spends his spare time wood chopping and enjoying an outdoor life.

FOR John Harris, one of the distractions of living at West Wittering is the sea. Before and during the war he was a professional sailor, and now, with small boats coming and going all day, he has to resist the temptation to pop round the corner and down the road and sail with the amateur sailors of the district.

Harris, who is forty and married, has lived at West Wittering for only eighteen months. He finds that being a countryman is a full-time job. "When I was a cartoonist in Sheffield," he says, "I thought a newspaper office was a hectic place to work." Now he has an acre of land, some chickens, two young children and a successful writing career. "And I've never been so busy."

His new story *Mad Dog*, which starts on page 13, is based on a short paragraph he saw in a newspaper. It was a news story about a policeman in America who had to shoot a thug who was hiding in an office. The dreadful dilemma of a man who, in cold blood, has to shoot another man deeply impressed Harris and he decided that it would make a short story plot.

When he gets an idea for a story, Harris thinks round it for some time, writes a first draft and forgets the whole thing for a week or so. If it then survives a critical reading he writes a final version. But a lot depends on the opinion of his wife Betty. Once she told him that she didn't like a novel he had written. Harris rewrote it according to her suggestions. "That version was serialized, bought by the B.B.C., a book club and a film company, and translated into five languages. My wife is worth a fortune."

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Free Speech

• The men who preferred silence

• Suits with a margin for error

• Fair play for theatre queues

As a change from watching television, I recently organized a discussion group in our locality. Twenty men and women joined it.

For the first few weeks all went well. There were some very lively arguments, and at times feelings ran interestingly high. Then one evening, during a particularly heated political discussion, six of the women suddenly got up and walked out in high dudgeon.

"Just like them to walk out," said one of the men. "Women always take a disagreement with their point of view as a personal insult." But five of the men lacked the women's courage: although they did not complain at the time, they have stayed away ever since.—F. S. N., Plymouth, Devon.

Superior Cats

Cats are decidedly better off than dogs ("Free Speech," December 8). I fancy that this is due to their attitude towards humans. This is summed up very nicely in the old country saying, "A dog looks up to you, a cat looks down on you, but a pig is your equal."—D. LATCHFORD, Southport, Lancashire.

Shock Tactics

I was in a bank recently when suddenly there was a loud bang. Everyone jumped, the staff looked frightened out of their lives, the teller hastily stuffed notes back into the till and the manager rushed out of his private office.

And there in front of us all stood the cause of the trouble—a small boy in a sailor suit, looking forlornly at a coloured stick, attached to which



were the remains of what had been, seconds before, a lovely large coloured balloon.—G. K., London, S.E.27.

Made His Mark

Recently I came across some old furniture which was not very dark, was polished very smooth, but looked dented all over. The interesting thing was that carved into it were life-sized mice—one on each table leg, one on one of the chair legs, one on each wall bracket and two on each dresser.—MRS. M. PADY, Walton-on-Thames.

The mouse sign was the "trade mark" of Robert Thompson, a craftsman who made Tudor-style furniture, and whose business is being carried on by his grandchildren near Thirsk, Yorkshire.

"In the Middle Ages, all craftsmen used a distinctive 'signature' like this," adds an expert.

All Together Now

Public authorities do consult each other when a roadway is opened up for repairs ("Free Speech," December 1). Each notifies the others in case someone else wants to repair that part of the road. What cannot

be foreseen, of course, are sudden emergencies like broken mains.—A. D. CORRICK, Bournemouth.

"It is true that there is a system by which various authorities keep each other informed of repairs to be undertaken, so that they can co-ordinate their work," says the Gas Council. "But this cannot be done in emergencies."

American Style

In America, suits made "ready to wear" are left unfinished so that adjustments can easily be made for



leg and arm measurements to suit the individual purchaser. Why is this system not copied in Britain?—J. STANTON, London, N.15.

"This is the second of America's three tailoring grades," says an expert. "The first is similar to our bespoke, and the third is purely ready-made."

"In Britain, tailors making ready-made suits feel that they have a sufficiently wide range of fittings to suit a customer. If not, alterations will usually be made free."

For Standing In

The idea of teaching boys cookery ("Free Speech," December 15) is spreading in secondary modern schools.

In my last housecraft teaching post, the senior boys received intensive cookery instructions during their last term at school. The time allotted was one whole morning a week—while the senior girls studied woodwork. The arrangement was most satisfactory.—MRS. S. PARK, Harrow Weald.

Wolverley's Caves

I was interested to see a photograph of one of the Wolverley rock caves in "Free Speech" (December 8). Years

ago it was fronted by a wooden building, and was used as a cobbler's shop.

Most of the Wolverley rock caves are small. The one pictured belongs to my family and is perhaps the only one capable of being used as a garage. But it houses only vehicles belonging to our family and people who have received permission.

So the people of Wolverley are virtually in the same position as regards garages as those elsewhere.—E. H. COLEY, Ellerdene, Wolverley, Kidderminster, Worcs.

Makeshift Comfort

British Railways' suggestion that folding seats in the corridors of our trains would cause congestion ("Free Speech," December 1) seemed very lame to me.

In Germany during the past two and a half years I have travelled many times on long distance trains equipped with folding seats in the corridors, and I have always thought what a good idea they were. They take up very little room and give hours of comfort on a long crowded journey.—B. W. WILLINGTON, Stretford, Manchester.

Seat In The Queue

It is time theatre managements stopped the ridiculous system of having unreserved gallery seats while allowing stools to be reserved in the queue outside the theatre.

I can see no reason why gallery seats shouldn't be booked like the others, and many of my shivering companions in the queue agree.—Miss D. F., London, W.1.

"It is difficult to reserve seats in galleries with unnumbered bench-type seating," says a theatre official. "But many theatres which have changed over to individual seating are now allowing gallery seats to be booked on the day of the show."

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

Who would be a boy in this enlightened age? When there are leaves to kick there's always someone anxious to sweep them up, and as soon as there's snow about some spoilsport at the Town Hall sends out cartloads of gravel to spike the best slides. Mind you, it is a little unfortunate that ice always forms in the busiest places. But as nobody else gets any fun out of this weather why shouldn't the youngsters? No wonder the winter sportsmen in Edwin Phillips's cover are hoping one of their tormentors will sprawl over his shovel.



SEE PAGE 26 FOR RESULT OF COVER CONTEST NO. 12

At Home in its Own Country

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

The Indian Continent must feel grateful to Lord William Bentinck, appointed Governor General in 1827, for doing so much to introduce tea-growing there.

Tea cultivation and processing provides employment and better living conditions for many thousands, and tea exports are a rich form of revenue to India, Pakistan and Ceylon. The first shipment of tea from Assam to Britain was in May 1838—about 350 lbs. In 1955, tea production in Assam and other parts of India totalled 664,500,000 lbs., in Pakistan 52,831,000 lbs., in Ceylon 380,013,000 lbs.

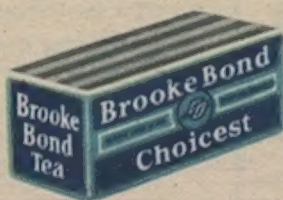
But not all the tea grown is exported. The peoples of these countries enjoy their cup of tea as much as you do. Originally confined to the wealthier classes by its high cost, tea is now enjoyed by almost everyone, even the lowliest villagers.



(With grateful acknowledgement of the help given by the Press Attaché to the High Commissioner for India)

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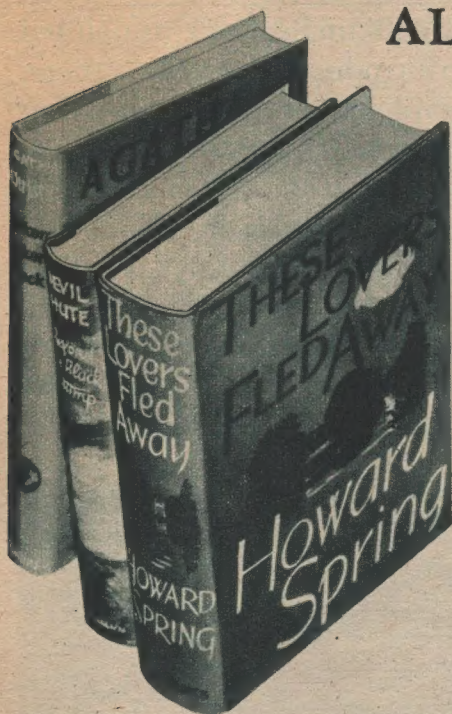
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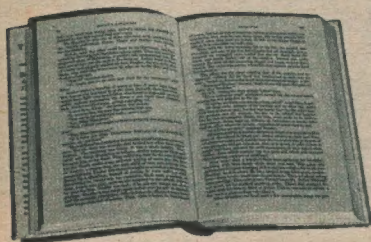
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For eleven long years he had dreamed of this day. He wasn't going to be cheated out of it now

STRANGER IN THE STREET

by *AL DEWLEN*

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE

HE was a high man and wide, sitting tiredly on a tuckered dun mount of plentiful rib—a coyote dun, people called the kind. In front of the man the unscarred stock of a new Winchester carbine jutted up from a dried saddle boot. Behind him, glugged old saddlebags rode with a weight clearly remindful to both horse and rider.

The man squinted bloodshot eyes at the sunset. His face was large, the forehead leathery and grooved. His name was Julius Rupp, buffalo hunter and freighter.

He looked at the nearest stubby hill and the thin smoke which pillowed up from beyond it and hung together despite the occasional gasps of the coming nightfall wind. He studied the smoke and the land.

After eleven years gone, you'd think a man might see his home country as though for the first time. Yet this rocky slope in the trail, the flat-roofed hill he faced, were set in his recollection as though he'd gone barefoot across them only the day before. On the yonder side, he recalled with a curious shiver, ran Dirty Creek.

It had been on Dirty Creek's sandy apron that, one day of a velvet spring, he picnicked with Jessie Larkin on the surprising good things she bought from her big house. After they

"Why do you come here?" Julius asked. "It's . . . well, it's some place to go"

had eaten they sat on the sand, speaking little. He cocked himself to toss a stone which would splash water on her. Instead he'd leaned, meaning wildly to kiss her, but only brushing her red foretop of hair. And he understood he wanted to marry Jessie Larkin, and must, if it took all his years.

It nowise did. The ceremony took place in May, in just the next year, and it was a good wedding, all things taken into account. He liked to recall how Jessie's eyes had shown through the veil. And God, he should never have left her.

Rupp pulled the dun head round, moving the animal towards the hill and the smoke. "We'll not make Coldiron for the night," he told the loose dun ears. "Oughtn't to let Jessie see me all whiskered and smelly, anyhow." The fact of his homecoming after eleven years would deal his wife shock enough.

BYOND the red hill, Rupp recalled, lay a smear of tough grass, then the flair of sand and flat white rocks rimming the stream. That's where the smoke began and where the camper would be. Might happen, Rupp thought, that the man would be free with his food and fire, perhaps owning a sharp razor as well, and content to lend it.

In the morning he would ride on into Coldiron. He'd buy new clothes, first off, and then get himself a haircut and a tub bath; a big whisky, just one, and something sweet and pleasing to pat on his face. Then he'd hunt up Jessie and cool his blistered eyes on that freak, cloud-grey streak which raced back through the bronze of her hair.

Many times Rupp had planned his way through the reunion with his wife, trying to calculate it down to the last small word and motion. He would pass her the burdened saddlebags, being quick about it, and he'd say something like: "I made it, Jessie—seventeen thousand cash money, earned honest, and I'm sorry it's taken longer than I figured."

As she took it, he would grin, and, if he grinned big enough, his wife might not notice the chunk blown out of his ear, or the little limp he had from the frostbite that got a few of his toes. After that, it would rest with Jessie.

The dun wheezed in a last sore-footed lunge to the hilltop, and halted. Rupp only partly heard the hoofs, barely glimpsed the blue roan and rider scudding away over a hummock beyond the creek.

"Hallo, the camp!" Rupp yelled. He sat waiting a reply. When it didn't come he shrugged and spurred lightly on towards the fire. A dented coffee-pot steamed on raked-out coals at the near edge.

Rupp reined in short of the fire. He hailed again, and watched the brush across the creek. After a moment he said: "Well, hell!" and dismounted, stepping well away from his horse and rifle. He used both hands to push back his hat, showing he was unarmed. The rider of the roan would be watching from out there someplace, which was the cautious way of this country.

Then Rupp saw the calf. The animal lay bunched in a three-footed tie, its upside flank billowing in terror.

He steadied, and stared at the fire that was no cooking fire, until at the creek side of it he saw the iron. It was no more than a cinch ring wired to a green willow rod, a contraption Rupp knew as one kind of running iron. He turned his gaze carefully west across the Dirty, towards the rise where the roan had vanished. Now he could imagine a frightened rifle beaded on him.

In the instant fear had him. He condemned himself. While at play with the old thoughts of Jessie, he had blundered in on a cow thief. And with the man watching out there, he couldn't well stay, nor could he ride out. . . .

The voice went off behind him. "If he wiggles," it bellowed, "I'll be blowing his



Johnsy Boy's fancy pistol was glinting in the light of the fire as it came down

shaggy damned head off, smack into the crick."

As it echoed, powerfully, Rupp's stomach pinched up in emptiness and doubt. He set his hunter's ears on the sound of movement behind him. Two men, or three, he made it, none of them the hidden brand runner he had feared.

Again the big voice fired off, thundering how he should rise and turn and stand almighty easy. Rupp thought of the fortune in his saddlebags, his passage money back to Jessie, and of the good new rifle in its boot, now too far away.

He turned, and saw that there were three of them, fanned wide, as if to herd him through Dirty Creek. "You're kind of crossed up," he said.

The thunder voice came from the man in the

middle, beginning deep in the squat, hogshead shape of him and rumbling out of a face pocked and wind-burnt. The eyes, Rupp saw, had smears of brown somehow hard to look at, and an edging of that flame which means hard liquor, used raw and used frequent. The man had a cowman's warped legs gnarled into leather breeches that were black with age. He held a revolver hip-high, its hammer locked back.

Rupp's belly growled, and he recalled he was hungry. He said: "I was just passing—"

"Oh, hell!"

It spilled hotly, pitched high, from the man at Rupp's left. Rupp looked at him. First impression, in the firelight, was of a boy standing uncertainly on small feet planted bravely



them, strolling towards the thrashing calf. The cowman called after him. "It's a JC cow, ain't it, Brooks?"

"It is."

"Haw, square in the act we got him. I can see the iron from here."

"So?" said the straw-haired man.

"So, hell, what do we do with him, huh?"

Rupp folded his arms; things ought to cool a bit now, for time was passing and they were talking, and mostly when men talked, they came to reason. He watched the shadow of the man called Brooks as it bent over the calf, saw the hands picking at the tie rope, heard the shadow say quietly: "There's a Ranger company putting up at Hudlow. Guess you could ride him over there."

"Haw!" the cowman spat. "That's a Chester calf, ain't I right? Me, I'm the foreman, ain't I? I'd reason I got the say-so here."

"You bet, Elwood, you call the shots," the pretty boy cut in.

"No harm in coffee," Rupp said. But he did not reach for it.

Brooks, now straightening up, flicked the freed pigging string at the panicky calf, helping it settle on which direction it would run. He said: "Might be there's a say-so for Coates, but there's none for you, Johnsy Boy. You got no stake in this."

Rupp sighed. "Smoke," he said, so that his hands poking at his pockets wouldn't call a bullet, and he found the tobacco. "Mister Brooks, I been tryin' to tell—"

"Name's Durham," the straw-haired man corrected sharply. "Brooks Durham."

"Well, I came off the trail—"

Johnsy stopped him, jumping up close, his voice rattling: "You, you're one filthy, lyin' coyote, ain't you?"

Rupp seized at the red-scarfed throat. Then he knew it was wrong; it had been counted on. The boy's fancy pistol glinted as it came, high, hard on Rupp's good ear. He felt the blood explode over his cheek as he fell.

RUPP groaned, turning his body on the burs in the sand. He was blood mad. Coming to his knees, he saw Johnsy's boots with their fancy tops. Rupp's breath steadied. He felt proud then, of every eighty-pound buffalo greenhide he had ever pitched head high on to a freight wagon. He put them all into the blow he drove at Johnsy's vest. He felt the pretty man crack and fold.

"I'm damned sick being put on as a thief," Rupp said. "A man don't grab some four-dollar calf when he's got money."

He was still rising from his knees when the boot broke his forehead. He heard the impact and, in the last moment, he thought how he'd hate it, Jessie seeing the bruise. . . .

When he came round, he was lying on his face near the fire. He could hear Elwood Coates and the straw-haired Mr. Durham talking. As he listened, he realized it was Durham he cursed the most. Durham was the strong one, if unarmed; Rupp had recognized this from the start, the same way he could in an instant point out the lead bull among a thousand buffalo.

Durham's even voice said: "I don't mean to sit here all night. Let's settle on something."

"Hell, Durham, whyn't you tail it back to town? Me and Johnsy, we can take care of him, to a fair."

"You're drunk. That's why I'm staying."

"Now, Durham, what you mean by that?"

"I mean you aren't hanging that man for stealing one half-starved stray."

"Maybe it's more'n one calf," Coates said. "The JC is missing a heap more, old man Chester says so, and I'm his goddam foreman, ain't I? It's two days' ride to them Rangers, so we just string him and—"

"No."

"Aw, how come all the hassle. I ketch me

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hard on Rupp's ear. Julius felt the blood explode over his cheek as he fell

apart, a boy extending a fancy pistol like a fevered target shooter on his first trip out. The youth was joltingly handsome.

Rupp turned back to the cowman. "I aimed to say, I rode up not five minutes past. Wanted me a hot-water shave, and I—"

"That's a Chester calf you got your piggin' string on," the squat cowman cut him off.

"It's no string of mine."

Rupp watched the cowman advance on him and saw that the pretty man was likewise working in. He grew cold. He stood beside a rustler's fire, and yonder lay a calf, and behind him was the cinch-ring iron.

"Whoa up, you two."

The order came calmly from the still man, off

to Rupp's left. This third man showed no weapon. He was town-dressed in a velvet-collared coat spun for indoors, flap-pocketed pants, heel-less Wellington boots nicely tallowed. The unhatted blond hair looked like dry straw.

Rupp nodded, feeling better. "If it's a thief you're huntin', you ain't found him."

"Make him shut up, Coates," the pretty man blurted, a strange heat trembling in his voice.

"Hell yes! Shut up," the cowman said.

"What's that awful stink?" the boy yelped.

"Buffle," the cowman answered. "This one's a hunter. Buffle hunters all stink that way."

"Go to hell," Rupp said. "All right if I drink some of that coffee?"

The big, straw-haired man moved away from

Man-eater of Kempekarai

I was trapped. Soon the river would flood my hiding place. And if I braved
the jungle I would meet a wounded tiger

by KENNETH ANDERSON



Along this stream bed prowled the man-eater. Anderson ordered a pit to be dug, had it camouflaged—and waited inside with a gun

THE small hamlet of Kempekarai stands on the lower slopes of a range of lofty hills in the North Salem district of Madras, in Southern India. Around it lie a few fields and beyond the fields the forest of dense bamboo, intersected by a rocky stream that flows down the centre of a valley.

Kempekarai was in a state of great fear, for a man-eating tiger had appeared, and three of its few inhabitants had already gone to fill his bill of fare.

The first victim, an old Poojaree, had left Muttur, eleven miles away, to come to Kempekarai a month before. He was never seen again. Elephants infest these areas, and very occasionally kill men, so when the Poojaree failed to arrive at Kempekarai a search-party set out towards Muttur. About five miles from Kempekarai they saw the tracks of a male tiger, a little blood by the path-side, the old man's staff and his loin-cloth—and nothing more.

Some ten days later, a woman went down to the community well about sunset to fill her water-pot for the night. She never returned. At 8 p.m. her husband and some friends, carrying lanterns and staves, visited the well to look for her.

The brass water-pot, half-filled with water, lay on its side about twenty feet from the well, where it had been dropped by the woman on her return to the village. Of her there was no trace.

Next morning, a search-party found the

woman's saree, later a silver anklet, and finally her remains.

A month dragged by. Kempekarai assumed the air of a besieged fortress. Nobody came in, and nobody went out. The danger was particularly great at night; human beings, with their cattle and sometimes their dogs, were barricaded together within cramped huts behind doors that were kept shut with logs of wood or rounded boulders from the stream.

But the very best precautions sometimes fall short of attaining their desired results. Mara, one of the sons-in-law of my old friend Byra, a Poojaree, had spurned to live in such conditions. One night he went out, but he did not return. His wife, anxiously waiting inside the hut, admits that she heard a dull thud, a rasping gurgle, but nothing more.

After fifteen minutes she raised the alarm. Nobody would come to her rescue, for nobody dared.

The inhabitants of the barricaded huts heard her shrieks for help. They knew that by this time Mara was beyond any help that they could give. He was dead, but they were alive. What was the use of going outside to join him among the dead? So they remained behind their barred doors, and listened to his wife's screams for the rest of that long night.

Next morning, a half-hearted attempt was made to find what was left of Mara, and it would have been unsuccessful but that the tiger had

boldly eaten his fill among the bushes within two hundred yards of the village.

Because of the fate that had befallen his son-in-law, my friend Byra, who happened to be at Kempekarai at that time, undertook the hazardous eighteen-mile journey to the village of Pennagaram next day. He came by himself, as nobody would accompany him, and made the journey without sight or sound of the man-eater.

At Pennagaram he sought out his old acquaintance, Ranga, and the two of them came by bus to Bangalore. I was surprised and delighted to see my old jungle companions once more. They told me the brief history of the man-eater. . . .

Three days later I was on the road to Pennagaram, where I left my car. We bought supplies at the local market, and within a few hours the three of us were trudging those eighteen miles to the little hamlet of Kempekarai, where the car could not go.

A couple of miles before our destination we found fresh pug-marks of a tiger on the foot-path. No human travellers had passed along this track for many days, and the spoor was clear. I made careful measurements and noted that the pugs belonged to a male tiger of average size, but could not tell whether he was the man-eater, or just a passing tiger.

The few inhabitants of Kempekarai were unable to add much to what I had already been told. They thought that the man-eater was an enormous animal, but, of course, all simple folk



Anderson is an engineer who hunts for sport. Terrified villagers asked for his help

when keyed-up to a state of sheer terror bordering on panic will attribute superhuman cunning and wholly impossible bodily strength and size to their oppressor.

The problem now was: how to proceed; and what to do? The answer was: wait for a kill, or present a bait. This particular tiger had not killed a single cow or other domestic animal belonging to the villagers. So far he had killed only humans.

Byra, Ranga and I went into conference over successive mugs of tea, and eventually an answer began to take shape. I thought we should try animal baits, but they thought a human bait—myself, of course—would produce immediate results. I heartily wished they had reached a different conclusion.

In a three-man committee, any two form an overwhelming majority. The odd man must give in, but I managed to force my point to the extent of agreeing that, together with the human bait, there would be no harm in tying out a couple of young bullocks at selected spots as an additional attraction.

No buffaloes were available at Kempekarai, so I bought two bullocks, one of which we tied up where we had found the pug-marks, and the other on the bed of a stream that meandered through the valley. I sat on the stone parapet-wall of the well, my back resting against one of the wooden uprights that supported the

pulley-wheel, over which ran a rope for drawing water.

The jungle began about fifty yards from the well in all directions except one. Here somebody had planted a dozen or more papaya trees. In daylight this undergrowth appeared negligible, but with twilight and approaching darkness I began to feel it presented an admirable line of approach for the man-eater, which could crawl through it to almost springing distance of where I sat, without my being aware of its presence.

When this thought came to my mind I changed my position to the other side of the well, using the opposite wooden upright as a backrest, so that I now faced the papayas.

I had decided to show myself only because we had fortunately come at a time just before full moon. Moonrise almost synchronized with sunset, but I had forgotten that the moon still had to top the range of hills to the east before it could cast its brilliance on that benighted well. This would only happen after 8 p.m., and I spent one of the worst ninety minutes of my life awaiting—I cannot hope to express how eagerly and anxiously—the first rays of that longed-for moon.

The darkness was deathly still, and not even the familiar nightjar came anywhere near me. A few bats flitted down the well, to sip the limpid water in a series of flying kisses as they quenched their thirst after the hot day.

I strained my eyes, not only towards the

papaya trees, but in all directions. Imagination created the form of the man-eater, slowly creeping, stealthily stalking me, from just outside my range of vision. I sat glued to the parapet wall, my .405 cocked, my thumb on the torch switch.

Shortly after eight o'clock the skyline above the eastern range grew more distinct; a pale glow diffused itself against the sky, dimming the stars, and then the moon appeared, lightening both the surroundings and my nervous condition. As the moon rose higher, the scene became brighter, until I could see almost clearly between the stems of the papaya trees. Not a sound disturbed the silence of my vigil for practically the first half of the night.

Shortly after 11 p.m. a sambar stag voiced its strident call from the bed of the stream where I had tied one of my bullocks. I recognized the note of alarm and fear in its voice as the call was repeated over and over again, to die away at last in the distance when the stag ascended the rampart of the opposing range of hills to safety.

Again silence fell, and the night dragged out its last hours. It then struck me that I might be able to catch the tiger's acute hearing, if he were anywhere within a mile, by operating the squeaking pulley wheel of the well. Perhaps he would hear and be attracted, thinking another prospective victim was drawing water.

The pulley screeched loudly in the silence of the night, and I continued for nearly an hour, stopping occasionally to survey my surroundings intently.

Nothing stirred. To all intents and purposes, I was the only living thing in that area, apart from the inmates of the huts, secure behind barricaded doors.

Soon after 3 a.m. the moon began to sink behind the western range of hills. It grew darker and darker, and I could see only a few yards around me, and that by the radiance of the stars that came to life, and twinkled overhead, with the disappearance of the setting moon.

There were only ninety minutes of darkness left, and I felt terribly sleepy. Still I had now to redouble my guard. Had I not been trying to attract the tiger for the past hour? As he had not passed that way all night, it was just possible he might do so now. Moreover, conditions for a surprise attack were all in his favour.

I realized that the man-eater had me completely at his mercy if he chose to attack. Should he roar as he charged, I could at least discharge my rifle at point-blank range. But, if he crept silently upon me, I would know nothing until struck down.

At the same time, all the rats and rabbits and other small animals which had been conspicuously absent all night appeared to select this moment to rendezvous near the well. They scurried about, rustling the dead leaves, sometimes noisily, sometimes barely audibly, while my excited imagination telegraphed the urgent message: **THE MAN-EATER IS COMING.**

The false dawn came and went. At five forty-five the brightening of the skyline once more above the eastern range told me that daylight was at hand and that the tedious vigil was nearly over.

It was well past seven before the sun peeped over the eastern hills, and I dragged my weary, sleepy steps to the tent I had pitched at the southern end of the village.

I had some hot tea, and a nap till ten thirty; then, accompanied by Ranga and Byra, I visited the bullock tethered in the stream bed. It was alive and well. Closer inspection showed that a tiger had approached within fifteen feet, and had passed on.

The sambar stag I had heard during the night had doubtless seen or scented this tiger, and had voiced his loud alarm.

We then went to see the other bullock, where a surprise awaited us. It had been killed by a tiger whose pug-marks were identical with

SHEILA VAN DAMM, queen of Britain's

**rally drivers, tells her own story of thrills
and danger on the toughest courses in Europe**

WOMAN AT THE WHEEL

Begins in John Bull Next Week



those I had carefully measured the previous day, near the same spot on the pathway.

The question now was this: were there two tigers in the vicinity, or had the second bullock been killed by the man-eater?

If there were only one tiger—and that the man-eater—why had he not killed the bullock which had been tied in the stream bed instead of just looking at it and choosing to kill the other?

I formed the opinion that there were two tigers, and that it was the man-eater which had ignored the bullock at the stream.

There was only one thing to do, and that was to fix a machan—a raised platform—above the partly-eaten brown bullock. Through experience, both our baits had been tethered near suitable trees; so while I went back to the tent for another nap, Ranga and Byra made a good job of slinging up the canvas camp chair I had brought with me.

Returning by 5 p.m., I took up my position high in the canvas chair, prepared for an all-night vigil.

The pathway, situated as it was on the western range above the village of Kempekarai, received the rays of the rising moon far earlier than did the village and the well. Soon after the sun sank below the western hill-tops, the moon peeped over the eastern range, and visibility was good all around me.

Nothing happened till shortly after eight, when I saw the tiger standing directly beneath me. How or from where he had come, I never knew. Certainly not along the path, which was clearly visible in both directions as it stretched away into the forest. I knew that the tiger was below me by the soft noise he made as he rubbed his body against the trunk of the tree in which I was sitting. Then he looked up and saw me.

With a snarling growl, the tiger began at once to claw his way up the tree trunk. Fortunately, we had selected a tree with a fairly straight

trunk till the first crotch was reached fifteen feet above the ground—where I was sitting on the camp chair. I knew that this was the man-eater, for any other tiger would have decamped at once.

Instinctively, I drew up both legs as high as possible, and tried in vain to get in a shot.

In his eagerness to get hold of me the man-eater stretched out a forepaw. His sharp claws drove through the canvas of the camp chair seat and straight through my trousers. But the tiger lost his balance and fell backwards, while instinctively, in my anxiety to protect my rear, I half-levered myself out of the chair. I was lucky not to drop my rifle and follow in the wake of the tiger.

As he fell backwards to earth, the man-eater realized that his presence had been disclosed, and no sooner had he landed on the ground than with a bound and a snarl he disappeared in the surrounding lantana.

There was now no point in remaining motionless or silent. The tiger's claws had made dangerous lacerations through my trousers, and there was some chance of the wound becoming infected. I had brought with me a variety of first aids, including a good stock of procaine penicillin and my 5-c.c. hypodermic syringe. But all these were in my tent at Kempekarai, some two miles away.

I decided to risk any danger from the tiger, in favour of getting first-aid. I scrambled down from my seat, praying fervently that the man-eater would not choose that moment for a second attack. Reaching the ground, I stood with my back to the tree trunk, while I freed the rifle from the rope by which I had lowered it.

All was as silent as the grave. Not a sound came from the forest to tell me the whereabouts of my recent attacker. He might be ten miles away, or behind the nearest bush.

After a few moments, I set forth on the two-mile walk to Kempekarai. About a quarter of a

mile from the village a low outcrop of boulders fringes the path. This was the most dangerous spot of all, as the tiger could lurk behind any one of those boulders. However, seeing him head the other way when he made off, I felt he had not had enough time to retrace his steps. With this mental assurance, I negotiated the rocks, and soon came to Kempekarai and my tent.

Ranga and Byra were awake, as they always remained when I went out alone, in case I should require their sudden assistance. They bathed my wounds, and I gave myself a shot of penicillin.

I was tired after my sleepless nights, and it was nearly nine before I awoke next morning. The wounds, I was glad to note, were not unduly painful.

After another injection, my wounds were redressed, and I breakfasted excellently on porridge, bacon and eggs, and an enormously large, ripe papaya fruit from the grove by the well-side where I had spent the first night.

Then I set off to visit the bullock tethered on the stream bed. I found him as alive and well as on the previous morning.

Returning the two miles up the path to where I had sat the previous night, I found that the tiger had not come back nor touched the bullock he had killed two nights before. His pug-marks, as he approached the tree, identified him as the tiger whose prints I had seen first.

We returned to Kempekarai to hold a council of war with the "grey-beards" of the village.

The obvious conclusion reached after this discussion was much the same as that reached by Ranga, Byra and myself on the first day we had come to Kempekarai: either await the next human kill, or offer human live-bait, preferably somewhere along the pathway to Kempekarai as it descends the western ridge.

The scratches which the tiger had inflicted made it impossible for me to sit still for more than fifteen minutes, and precluded all chances of my sitting in wait for the man-eater. If I were to act as a bait I should not need to sit still. In fact, movement would certainly help to attract the tiger.

Eventually we arrived at what we all thought to be a very ingenious plan.

The footpath down the range to Kempekarai was crossed at several places by streamlets and dried-up stream beds, bordered by dense undergrowth and clumps of bamboo. The beds of these small rivulets were rocky, and admirably suited the purpose I had in mind.

The first of these small streams on the way down to Kempekarai from the tree on which I had sat the night before was the broadest of all, and was closely covered with rounded boulders of all sizes.

My plan was to detach a cartwheel from one of the only two bullock carts in Kempekarai, dig a pit in the dried-up stream bed, get inside it, place the wheel above, and anchor it securely around the circumference with big boulders. Smaller boulders and a camouflage of dry leaves would help to conceal the cartwheel.

I would also leave a human dummy somewhere on the footpath where it crossed the stream. The cartwheel would be raised off the ground at one end, facing the dummy, to allow me a range of fire in that direction.

It was too late to set the cartwheel that day, so we spent it making the dummy from an old pair of my trousers, a gunny sack, some straw and a dhoti. The head of the dummy was a work of art; it was made from a large-sized mature coconut, complete with its fibre.

On dress occasions Indian women sometimes augment their natural hair with false hair, which they twist into a bun or "coonday" behind their heads. In this they stick flowers, particularly jasmine.

Fortunately there was a village belle in Kempekarai who was vain enough to be the

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MAD DOG

by JOHN HARRIS

ILLUSTRATED BY OSTRICK

Forty yards away, in a room across the street . . . a thug, with a gun and a girl as a hostage. . . . It was the hardest shot of Sergeant Henderson's life

HENDERSON came to the surface through grey mists of sleep in which, somewhere, he had been bound down and couldn't move. He tried to heave over in the bed, stirring the bed-clothes with him. Then, as consciousness flooded over him, he realized why it was that he couldn't lift his arm. Someone was holding it and pressing it gently.

His eyes opened abruptly and he stared up at his wife, blinking in the sunshine that streamed into the room. "What time is it?" he said. "What's the matter? It can't be time to get up yet."

"Tom," she said softly, "you've got to get

down to the police station. You're wanted. It's urgent."

He stared at the clock on the dressing-table, flanked by the pictures of his daughters. "At this time? I only got into bed a couple of hours ago. Why would they want me at the station now? Something happen in my district last night? Someone drop dead?"

"I don't know, Tom, but it's important."

He sat up slowly and heaved himself out of bed, a big man, still young-looking, but with crisp greyish hair.

"What is it?" he grumbled, as he appeared at the bottom of the stairs. "Can't they run a police force without chasing me out? I've

only just come off duty. Nobody at the station wants a perfectly ordinary copper just now."

"It isn't a perfectly ordinary cop they want, Sergeant," came a voice through the haze of sleep that still hung about him, and he saw a uniform across the kitchen, another policeman whose face he knew.

"Hallo, Fred," Henderson said, a little startled. "What are you doing here?"

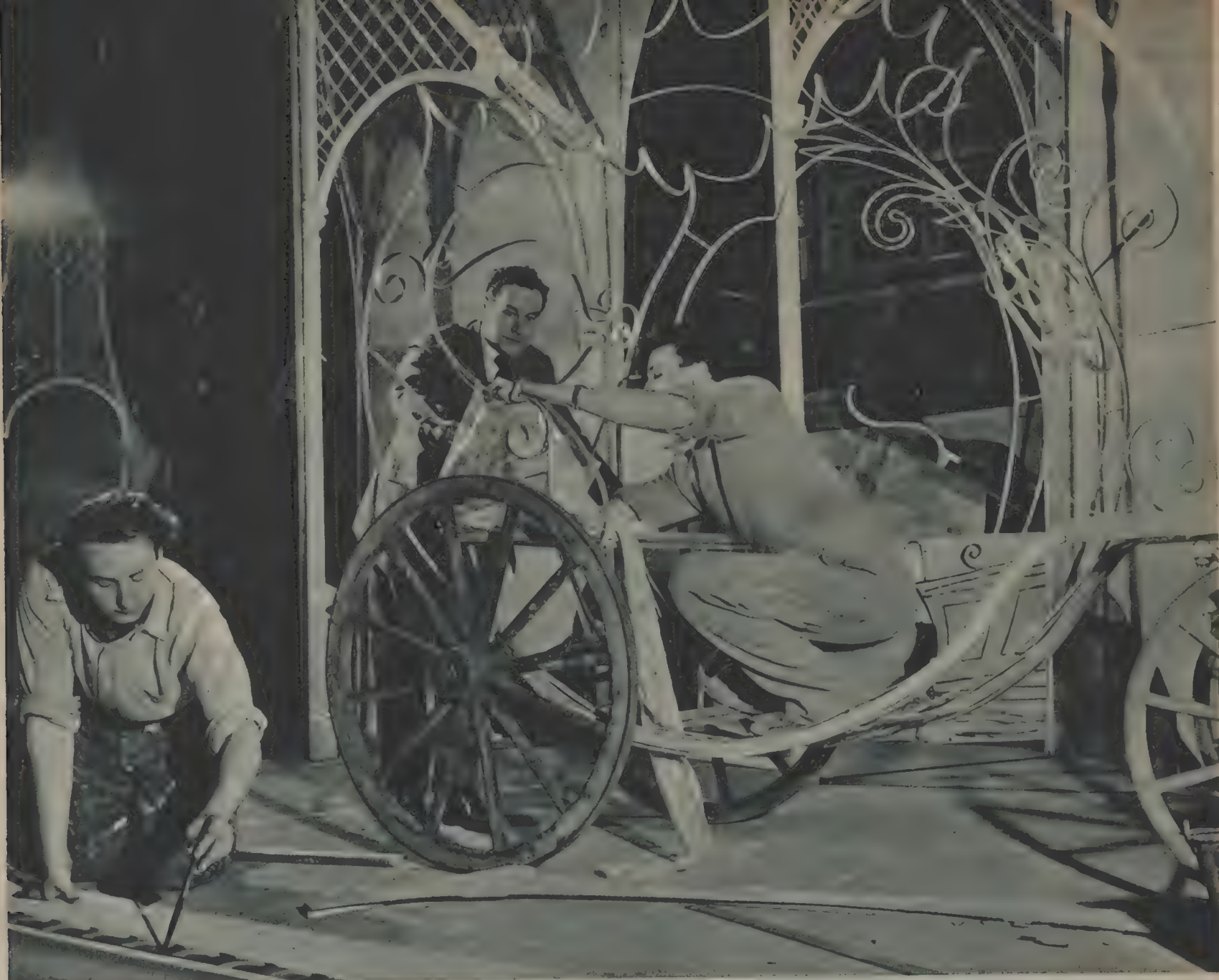
The other man looked awkward. "Come to get you, Tom. The Old Man sent me up with the car. Told me to get you up myself, personally, if necessary."

"It must be important when they send a squad

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Tom had to shoot to kill—and kill the right person. But his vision was swimming and he knew his courage was failing. "My God," he said. "I can't do it"





At his theatre Gillam checks every detail—even the pantomime coach. And he complains if his cast look unkempt in public

Two and a half years ago all the principal theatre managers in London received a neat, gold-embossed card inviting them to the première of a new play called *All For Mary* at the Connaught Theatre, Worthing, Sussex. Melville Gillam, who runs the theatre, sends out similar invitations every time he presents a new play. The catch he hopes to land is a West End presentation.

On this occasion, the barrage of invitations lured six London managers to Worthing during the week. The first five, who came between Monday and Friday, complimented Gillam on the play and the production, but none would risk staging his play in London's West End.

Meanwhile, Gillam had other problems. Dissatisfied on the opening night with the final scene, he asked the co-authors, Kay Bannerman and Harold Brooke, to provide a new ending. They wrote it that night, the cast rehearsed it on Tuesday morning and afternoon, and played it at the Tuesday evening performance.

But Gillam was still not satisfied. The scene was altered for Wednesday, altered for Thursday and again for Friday. The sixth and final version was played on the Saturday matinée and seen by Henry Sherek. He liked the play but, says Gillam, "needed persuading." For the rest of the day, Gillam badgered Sherek until he agreed to risk presenting the play in London.

All For Mary opened on September 9, 1954, at the Duke of York's Theatre, and ran for nine months. It earned Worthing Rep a handsome profit and, says Gillam, "boosted our prestige to the skies."

Gillam's flair for picking plays and players

Melville Gillam's six-day wonder

*A different play every week makes his theatre boom—and paves
the way for West End successes* by DAVID MILLWOOD

and for attracting the notice of London managers, has helped to make the Connaught the liveliest and most profitable repertory theatre in the country.

In the past two years, eight plays which Gillam first presented at Worthing were transferred to the West End.

A nimble, precise bachelor of forty-five with crinkly black hair and a smooth manner, Gillam is a former actor and booking manager who combines a keen theatrical instinct with a shrewd business ability.

When he went to the Connaught in 1946 as assistant to the general manager, the theatre was leased by the J. Arthur Rank Organization, and run to give promising young film actors stage experience in repertory. Jean Simmons, Diana Dors, Anthony Steele and Bill Travers are all former members of the cast. In 1949, the Rank

Organization decided not to renew its lease, and the theatre was put up for sale.

Instead of regarding the sale as a disaster which would throw him out of work, Gillam saw it as an opportunity to control the theatre himself.

He called a meeting of local residents and suggested: "You buy the theatre and I will run it for you—at a profit." His offer was accepted. A company was formed which bought the Connaught for £36,000, made Gillam managing director and gave him a free hand in running the theatre.

Since 1949, Gillam has wrought a minor miracle in the theatrical world. While many repertory companies have been squeezed out of business or forced to depend on an Arts Council grant, he has built Worthing Rep into a profit-making enterprise with high artistic standards.

Impresarios find Gillam's theatre a valuable



Gillam directing Pamela Thomas and other members of the company. Sometimes he may keep rehearsals going until the doors open

Peggy Mount (right), star of the West End success *Sailor Beware*, came from Worthing. Diana Dors and Jean Simmons also acted there

testing-ground. "Every show is a gamble, and to present one in the West End costs thousands of pounds," says Jack Waller. "For the price of the train fare to Worthing I can see new plays acted and staged to West End standards."

After a tryout at the Connaught, *Sailor Beware*, presented by Waller and directed by Gillam, opened at the Strand Theatre in February, 1955, and became one of London's biggest hits for years. It is still running—and earning royalties for Worthing Rep.

Gillam, who has a flat near the Connaught Theatre and another in London, personally controls every aspect of his enterprise. He selects the plays, engages actors, producers and theatre staff, vets every production, meets his patrons, handles advertising and business correspondence. Once he stopped a leading lady in the street and took her to task for her unkempt appearance.

Although Gillam gives his producers a free hand, he may often criticize and alter a production himself—even at the last minute. At a Monday-afternoon dress rehearsal recently he threw up his hands when he found that the set of a luxurious Edwardian drawing-room lacked the typical Edwardian crystal chandelier—and dispatched one of his staff to London to find one in time for the evening performance.

For two days a week, Gillam stays in London to see new plays, meet actors, agents and managers, and scout for talent. But he is always in Worthing on Monday nights. After the show, he holds a first performance inquest in the theatre lounge with cast, producer and stage staff. It often goes on until the early morning.

Before and after every performance, Gillam or his general manager, Kenneth Ewing, are on hand in the foyer to welcome patrons and discuss the play. At a patrons' theatre club, producers, actors, scenic designers and Gillam himself give talks and take part in discussions. He opens the theatre lounge as a café in the mornings. "The catering does not show a profit, but the café is a good breeding ground for a future audience—nearly all the patrons are students."

The cultivation of an audience is high on Gillam's list of priorities. The success of a weekly rep is often indicated by the willingness of the audience to see almost any type of play. Gillam claims that his average of one new play every six weeks is the highest in the country, and that he has "educated" the Worthing audience to support new plays and serious drama that would play to empty houses at most provincial theatres.

The secret, he says, is to build up a nucleus

of keen, regular theatregoers—"word of mouth recommendation is worth more than ten good press notices"—and to give every play the best possible production.

"Sometimes, to attract a good audience, you must sugar the pill. I wanted to present *Othello*, but I didn't want rows of empty seats, so I engaged Donald Wolfit for the leading rôle. We sold out. For the same reason, I engaged Jean Kent for *The Lady's Not For Burning* and Fay Compton for *Family Portrait*, both 'difficult' plays at the box office."

The son of a Worcestershire farmer, Gillam entered the theatre business in 1935, when he took the lease of the Victoria cinema at Lye, near Stourbridge, and turned it into a theatre.

"After four weeks of a dreary company sent to me by a London agent, I decided that I could do better myself. I retained one or two of the actors, and recruited others locally to form my own company. We struggled on for two and a half years before making any money. Then the war came and closed us down. I joined the R.A.F."

Today, Gillam's single-mindedness leaves him no time for any interests outside the theatre. In the past five years, he has taken only one holiday—a week in Paris. After two days, he phoned Kenneth Ewing and asked him to fly out with his mail and the latest news. Ewing caught the next plane, delivered Gillam's letters, gave him the news and flew back in time to welcome patrons to the evening performance.

When Gillam returned, he announced that he had read two promising plays, signed up a variety act for the Christmas pantomime and spotted an eye-catching method of displaying pictures in the Louvre which could be adapted to the theatre posters in the foyer.

LATE one Sunday night in 1954, Gillam was roused from bed by a phone call from Worthing Hospital. An actor who had the leading rôle in the next production was the victim of a motor accident. Gillam dressed and hurried to the hospital. The actor was not badly hurt, but he was distressed about letting the company down.

Gillam, none too hopefully, reassured him that someone would be found to take the rôle, and returned to his flat. He began phoning at midnight and was still phoning at 3 a.m.

At 3.30 a.m. he located an actor in Newcastle who had understudied the part twelve months earlier and extracted a sleepy promise that he would catch the first train south. "We were lucky," says Gillam. "The part was too difficult



Stars often join Gillam's shows. In this year's pantomime, Patti Lewis (centre) is Dandini, with Susan Beaumont as Cinderella

to learn in a day." After snatching a few hours' sleep, he was in the theatre at nine.

Potter recalls another night when the show was almost sabotaged by the leading man and the leading lady. In the first act, the script called for the hero to push the heroine across the stage and slap her face. When the curtain came down, the actress complained that he was too rough. A row flared up. Both artists locked themselves in their dressing-rooms, and vowed they would never be seen on the same stage again.

Gillam remained in his office and sent Potter backstage. "People were rushing about with smelling salts, arguing, shouting and pleading," says Potter, "all to no avail."

The interval dragged on—ten, fifteen, twenty minutes. Finally, Gillam made a drastic gamble. He sent Potter backstage again with orders to raise the curtain and to give both artists the ultimatum that if they didn't go on the audience would be told why.

"Fortunately," says Gillam, "they capitulated."

THE END



"A thousand thanks!" Roulade said. . . . And Carell knew he was making excellent progress ; it was obvious that he had played his rôle well

A DEAL IN DIAMONDS

by OSCAR SCHISGALL

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

Just another stone or two—that was all Carell wanted. But he had to be cautious . . . he couldn't afford to answer too many questions

It was already dark when the man who called himself Georges Carell bought the bottle of cognac—Carell cognac—in a small shop on the rue van Dyck. With the package under his arm, he walked quickly towards the home of the diamond dealer, Aristide Roulade.

As he searched for house numbers, he warned himself that he would have to be cautious. Aristide Roulade was no fool. At seventy-seven he was the doyen of the Antwerp diamond business, and the fact that he had so far refused to do deals with Carell might imply distrust.

He was heavy-set and dark-haired, this Georges Carell, with a stubborn, square face that tended to bulge at the jowls. Ever since he had come to Antwerp, almost a year ago, he had tried again and again to establish some sort of friendly liaison with the diamond dealer; and at last he had won this invitation to visit Roulade's home.

When Carell rang at No. 23, the elderly merchant himself opened the door and offered a cordial handclasp. He was a short man, white-haired, with pink cheeks and bright grey eyes.

The gift of cognac obviously pleased him. "You are kind, Monsieur Carell," he said, unwrapping the package. "Ah! The cognac of your own family. What could be more appropriate?" He opened the bottle and from a cabinet took a couple of glasses. "Carell cognac is one of the finest."

Carell answered with proper modesty: "My family has always been proud of it." He was glad that he had thought of bringing the gift, but his whole purpose in coming was to add a few of Monsieur Roulade's gems to those which were already hidden in the lining of his grips. But at a time like this it was wise to be patient. *Let the cognac warm him for a while, he thought.*

"Your family is old in the industry—no?" Roulade suggested.

"Old?" Carell laughed. "We have been distilling cognac for only four hundred years." He accepted a glass, raised it in a toast. "To your health, Monsieur Roulade, and to a pleasant association between us!"

Roulade savoured his drink like a devotee, eyes closed. "To a pleasant association," he repeated. "My colleagues at the club speak highly of you."

Why shouldn't they? Carell thought. On many occasions in the past year he had paid cash for parcels of diamonds at the Diamond Dealers' Club. He had flown to New York with them, always selling the stones at a good profit. And he could have continued this pleasant and

legal practice without trouble, were it not for the fact that he had more spectacular ambitions.

Now that he had established credit with the Antwerp diamond merchants—now that they allowed him to sign chits and take diamonds home for examination and appraisal—Carell had accumulated, at his flat, a fortune in gems. By Monday he planned to be in South America with them, under a new name. He would, in fact, have even more diamonds than he had now if he could persuade Aristide Roulade to part with a stone or two.

Roulade was holding his glass up to the light, more interested in brandy than in diamonds.

"Remarkable," he said. "Wines of the same brand differ in taste from one year to another. But cognac? Choose one brand of cognac, and you can be sure of the same taste year after year. Remarkable!"

Carell had to react, he felt, like one who had been reared in the town of Cognac. "I wouldn't call it remarkable," he said. "After all, a brand is made year after year from grapes out of the same vineyards. Year after year the *eau de vie* is distilled in the same way, aged in the same barrels. We follow a consistent formula. Why shouldn't the cognac always taste the same?"

Aristide Roulade continued to squint at the liquor like a connoisseur. "Monsieur Carell, I must be frank," he said. "I planned to ask you a favour. I suppose I should wait an hour or so, to be diplomatic. But since we are discussing cognac now—do you mind?"

"I shall be happy to be of service, monsieur."

"I have a nephew near Bruges in the business of manufacturing wine barrels. It would be good to get him an *entrée* into the cognac industry. If you could give the young man an introduction. . . ."

"But of course!" Carell waved the thing aside as if it were of no consequence. "You will give me his name and address, and I will write about him to Cognac. *Voilà!* It is done."

"A thousand thanks!" Aristide Roulade poured more cognac, and Carell knew he was making excellent progress.

What pleased him most, as he listened to the old man, was the knowledge that he had played his rôle so convincingly. A year ago, arriving at Antwerp with a newly contrived passport, he had claimed to be a member of the venerable cognac-distilling family. His own record, spotted by encounters with the police of several cities, would never have gained him admission to the Diamond Dealers' Club. But the pretence of being a Carell had opened all doors.

He had previously met the real Georges Carell

in Madagascar, where they had spent several months together. There he had learned that the man had long since broken with his family. And when the Frenchman had been drowned while swimming, he himself had solemnly undertaken to notify the family. Also, he had promptly forgotten the duty.

A month later, when the Diamond Dealers' Club had checked Carell's background, the inquiry brought only the information that Georges Carell was a bona fide member of the Cognac family, a man of independent means who had left Cognac a long time ago, to seek other ventures. . . .

"Tell me," Aristide Roulade was saying

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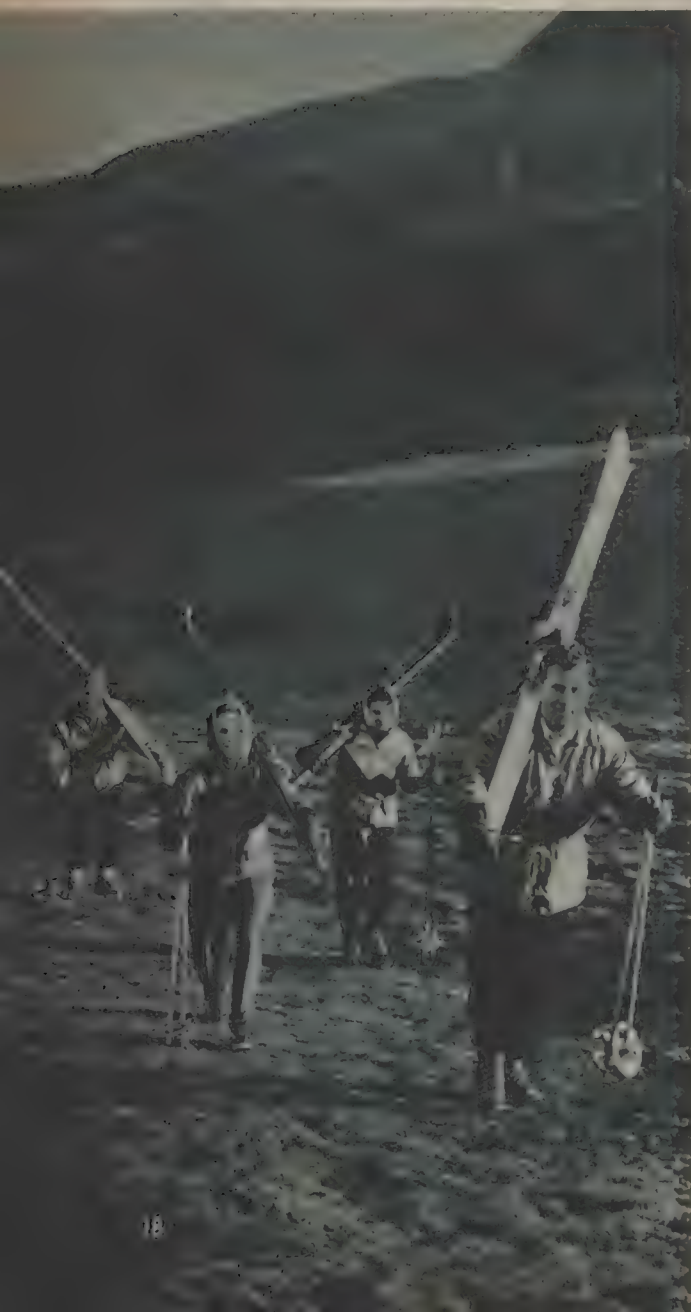


Carell packed his clothes faster than he had ever packed in his life. He was in a panic . . . but he still had time to get away

High school for skiers

by FRANCIS HITCHING

Jock Kerr Hunter helps to give the Highlands a Continental touch for the lovers of mountain sport



It was a mild winter's day, with low cloud keeping the temperature well above freezing, when Jock Kerr Hunter led a party of skiers into the Scottish Cairngorm Mountains one recent Christmas. They left their car where the road ended, four miles from the ski-slopes, and began the ninety minutes' climb.

They were more than two thousand feet above sea level when Hunter felt the warm west wind swing round to the north and become bitterly cold. Within ten minutes, a blizzard swept over the mountainside, driving the party behind a rock for shelter.

They sat there for two hours, watching the snow drift eight feet deep in front of them. "It was so cold," says Hunter, "that the sandwiches froze as we put them in our mouths." When the storm finally blew itself out, the skiers were anxious to carry on up the mountain so that the day would not be entirely wasted.

Hunter refused. He took them protesting back to their cars. "An hour later they knew I was right," he says. "Another blizzard came up, and instead of lasting two hours it lasted twenty-four. We might have been stuck on the mountain all night."

Hunter, a sixteen-stone kilted Scot who is forty-six but looks ten years younger, knows how rigorous and changeable Scottish weather can be. A considerable part of his job as senior technical representative of the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation is to build up winter sports in Scotland.

Last year, when a record ten thousand people skied on Scottish mountains, about one-quarter of them took his courses of ski tuition. He warns them all that although long periods of the

winter are sunny and windless, it is often cold and an average of one day in six is "really dirty." Some people do not take the warning seriously. A tourist officer who came to take photographs of ski-ing at 4,000 feet arrived in a business suit with a pair of galoshes under his arm. "There are thousands like him," says Hunter.

During Easter week, 1953, Hunter spent a night searching for six skiers who were lost in the misty peaks of the Cairngorm range. From a shooting lodge which was the nearest large building to the mountains he sent twelve skiers up the two routes most likely to have been followed by the lost skiers. Then he telephoned the R.A.F. mountain rescue service, asking them to look at the foot of icy slopes where mountaineers had died in previous years.

In the morning, after a fruitless night watching signals from beacons on the mountains telling him that the skiers had not been found, he drove round the long circular road which surrounds the mountains. At the foot of each glen he sent out small search parties which were to converge on the central peak. "It was an impossible job," he says. "The lost skiers could have been anywhere in an area of a thousand square miles."

At midday he was still sending off search parties, and had not slept for twenty-nine hours, when he was telephoned from a police station twenty miles away. The lost skiers had arrived exhausted in a village after walking thirty miles down a deep gully and spending the night huddled in the corner of a shooting hut.

Scotland has had only one ski-ing tragedy since the sport started there fifty years ago. An eighteen-year-old girl, practising on top of the Cairngorms, skied down an icy slope ending in an overhang of snow. Hunter, watching from the slopes below, saw her fall two hundred feet to her death.

He carried one end of her stretcher four miles from the foot of the mountain to the shooting lodge. "I have since been convinced that a

A ski-ing party, led by Hunter, climbs to the snowline. More ski-lifts are needed if Scotland is to compete with the Continent



Beginners get expert ski-ing tuition at schools such as Glenmore Lodge at the foot of the Cairngorm Mountains

Highland snow can be soft and slow or fast and icy. But Hunter's Norwegian instructors offer training for both



road must be built to the ski-slopes," he says. "Nobody has ever managed the walk in under an hour. One day, those sixty minutes may be the difference between life and death."

Within a year, the road may be there. Hunter is secretary of the Cairngorms Winter Sports Development Association, where a group of skiers, landowners and hoteliers are planning to open up the biggest range of mountains in Britain. As a first step, they are to build a £15,000 road to the foot of the mountains at 2,500 feet. Hunter spent much of last summer persuading the Forestry Commission, which owns the land, to let him construct it along a dried-up burn. Just after he had obtained permission, a cloudburst changed the burn into a torrent. "We had to start mapping a new route and getting permission all over again," says Hunter.

In spite of such setbacks, Hunter is enthusiastic about Scotland's prospects for winter holidays. "We're going to make it compare with the Continent," he says. The massif of the Cairngorms, with a radius of twenty miles from the 4,000 feet high central peak, is ideal for ski-ing. From 2,500 feet upwards, there is snow from mid-December until June. During January and February, the whole range is often covered.

This year, for the first time, Hunter can offer ski tuition by Continental instructors from Christmas to mid-May. He recruited six Norwegian skiers when he went on a training course in their country. Always on the lookout for teachers, he recently cabled the Red Cross in Austria, offering jobs to any suitable Hungarian refugees.

Hunter is not an expert skier. "I'm good enough to teach pupils the preliminary turns, but then I hand them over to the professionals," he says. With the Norwegians, he has worked out a training system particularly suited to Scottish slopes, on which the surface can change rapidly from being soft and slow to fast and icy. "We

make learners take it very gently, with the emphasis on control rather than speed," he says.

People who do not take Hunter's word for this sometimes learn the hard way. A young Norwegian instructor asked if he could join one of Hunter's ski-schools. After a few zigzag test runs down the mountain he announced he was going to try a fast run from the top to the bottom. He chose a deep gully, known as the White Lady, about half a mile long, which was four hundred yards wide at the top but narrowed to only ten yards at the bottom. Against Hunter's advice, the instructor tried the run.

By the time he reached the narrowest part of the gully he was ski-ing at about 80 m.p.h. He twisted his body into a power christiania, a violent turn in which the edges of the skis dig into the snow and the skier skids sideways to a stop.

"At the speed he was travelling, his ankles couldn't take the strain," says Hunter. "He crashed, spinning like a Catherine wheel, over a small precipice at the end of the snow. When I got there, I found he had only broken a ski. But it could just as easily have been his neck."

In spite of weather and snow conditions unlike anywhere on the Continent, Scotland's accident rate for skiers is low. One of the reasons, says Hunter, is the shortage of ski-lifts. Mountains have to be climbed on foot, strengthening the leg muscles for ski-ing. This year, shortly after the Scottish Ski Club opened Britain's first permanent ski tow on a mountain near Glencoe, three people broke bones in one day. But without having to climb slowly to the top of each run, another skier was able to achieve more than eight miles of downhill running in a day, easily a British record.

Hunter recognizes that if Scotland is to compete with Continental winter sports resorts, there must be more ski-lifts.

A few people have complained of the long tramps to the mountains, one of them being an immaculately dressed Englishman who arrived

from Switzerland to take part in a race. When Hunter told him there was no ski-lift, he caught the next train back to London.

After the road to the Cairngorms has been built, Hunter plans to erect a chair-lift which will take skiers up 1,500 feet of mountain.

At present, says Hunter, there is almost as much walking as there is ski-ing. "It's arduous, but people seem to like it."

HUNTER enjoys the tough challenge set by Scottish mountains. He was born in 1910, the son of a sea captain who believed in the virtues of fresh air. "It seemed natural for me to become a P.T. instructor," says Hunter, who taught in a boys' school until the war, during which he was a lieutenant-commander in the R.N.V.R. Two days before he was demobilized, he was offered his present job with the S.C.P.R., whose holidays are designed to make people enjoy themselves while they get fit.

Hunter takes a pride in being an ambassador for his schemes, enthusiastically keeping fitter and stronger than any of his pupils. Sometimes, though, he has to admit to being middle-aged.

On his trip to the ski-instructors' course in Norway, he found himself the only person more than twenty-five years old. "They had been training for weeks," says Hunter. "By the third day of the fortnight's course, I could hardly stand up. I twisted my back. It hurt—but it gave me a chance to recuperate in the hotel."

Last year, at the end of a long day on the Cairngorms demonstrating ski technique, he led his class on the four-mile walk back to their cars. Before they had gone a mile, one of the girls stumbled and fell, too tired to go any farther. Hunter, who has walked forty miles in a day, picked the girl up and carried her on his back the rest of the way. In the evening, he went to her hotel to make sure she was all right. "I found her in the middle of the floor dancing an energetic Scottish reel," says Hunter. "I collapsed into bed."

THE END

'You are under arrest'

by ALAN BURGESS

Outside the police station the children were chanting, "Let her out!" But Gladys had broken the law—to save their lives

THE Chinese Nationalist officer commanding the party scouting on the wrong side of the river looked back at the men straggling along behind him. There were eight of them: unshaven, their heads closely cropped.

They would hang on as best they could—until nightfall, if possible. Nightfall would save them. Then they could signal their comrades on the far bank, and the precious boat camouflaged with reeds could be pushed out into the wide river and ferried across. Enough face would be saved by nightfall.

Then there was an odd noise. A far-off, high-pitched sound, wavering and uncertain. It sounded almost like singing—faint and far away, high and monotonous, the sexless piping of many children.

The officer mounted a slight rise in the bank, crawling carefully to the top. He reached for his binoculars and focused.

It was an astonishing sight. A great crowd of children was assembled on the bank, all seated in a circle and singing loudly. Some smaller ones were splashing and jumping in the shallows.

He motioned his men back with a hand-signal. "Wait here," he said. "It may be a trick. Be alert." The Japanese had driven refugees before them on many other occasions.

As he walked along the bank, the children saw him, and raced towards him, gurgling and shouting with delight.

"Ai-weh-deh," they screamed, "here's a soldier. A soldier."

The young officer noticed then the small woman sitting on the ground. She was thin, hungry-looking. She got to her feet as he approached, and he realized that she was a foreigner.

He asked: "Who are you?"

"We are refugees trying to reach Sian," said Ai-weh-deh simply.

That was what the Chinese called her—Ai-weh-deh, the virtuous one. In London, where she had been a housemaid, her name was Gladys Aylward. Determination to become a missionary had brought her, despite all obstacles, to Shansi province, in North China. She had lived through many horrors in the war against the Japanese. Now, with a price on her head, this small Englishwoman was trying to lead a hundred Chinese refugee children to safety, across the Yellow River, out of the way of the invading armies.

After twelve days of marching, hungry and thirsty, they came down from the mountains to the Yellow River—to find everybody fled, and no boats. Four days they waited on the

bank. No boats. Then Gladys said: "Let us kneel down and pray."

Now, here was this soldier.

"This will soon be a battlefield. Don't you realize that?" he said.

"All China is a battlefield," she said wearily.

"Are you in charge of these children?"

"Yes, I am in charge of them. We are trying to cross the river."

She was quite a young woman, but her face had a sallow, unhealthy look.

"You are a foreigner?"

"Yes, I am a foreigner."

"I think I can get you a boat," he said. "It will need three journeys to take you all across, and it is dangerous. If a Japanese plane comes over when you are half-way across there will be little hope."

"We must cross the river."

"You will probably manage to get food in the village on the other side. The people do not like to leave their homes even when the Japanese come."

He walked to the river edge, inserted his fingers in his mouth and whistled loudly three times in a peculiar piercing fashion. From across the river came three answering whistles. Two little figures far away on the other bank pushed a boat into the water and began to scull it across.

"I cannot thank you enough," Gladys said. "I thought it was the end of us when we couldn't cross the river."

The young officer noticed her sway a little as one of the children pushed against her. "You are ill," he said. "You should find a doctor. The Nationalist troops on the other side of the river will have a doctor."

"I am all right," she said. "When we get to Sian I shall be all right."

WITH shouts of glee the children filled the boat. The soldiers ferried them rapidly to the other side. They returned and more of the children piled in. On the third journey the officer helped the foreign woman into the boat with the last group of children. His men had gathered round to help. As the boat moved away from the bank, he called them to attention and gravely saluted. He called: "Good luck, foreigner!"

Gladys found a village two or three miles back from the bank of the Yellow River, and the people were hospitable to them. Although many hundreds of refugees had passed through, they still found food to spare for the children. They stayed in the village only long enough to finish the food, and then moved on. If the Japanese were approaching the river she wished to get as far away from it as possible. They spent that



"This will soon be a battlefield"



Don't you realize that?" said the soldier. Gladys replied wearily, "All China is a battlefield"

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN BERRY

night in the fields, and went on again next morning to the town of Mien Chu. It, too, was badly bombed, but an old woman directed her to a refugee organization. She found it in an old temple; there were cauldrons of steaming food; they were made welcome. And then the police arrived. The inspector was a fat and fussy little man.

"I understand," he said, "that you have crossed the Yellow River."

"Yes."

"Then you are under arrest. You should not have crossed the Yellow River."

"If you arrest me, you'll have to arrest all the children, too."

A little pucker of astonishment creased the blandly official face.

"You mean to tell me you are in charge of all these children?"

"I am, and there's no one else to look after them." She was tired; it was late; and she wanted to rest. She tried wheedling. "Why don't you leave us alone tonight? I'll come down to your police station first thing tomorrow morning, and you can arrest me then. I shan't try and escape with all these children, shall I?"

He went off into the growing darkness, and Gladys wearily spread out her bedding.

NEXT morning, accompanied by all the children, she marched down to the police station to be interrogated.

The children were not allowed inside, and rumours that something awful was going to happen to Ai-weh-deh spread among them. They stood in a block outside the front door and, as soon as she went inside, kept up an increasing chant, "Let her out! Let her out!"

The magistrate was a benign-looking elder who showed that he had little sympathy with the policeman, who began to question her.

"You say you crossed the Yellow River?"

"Yes."

"Then you have committed a crime. You will please examine this document."

Gladys scanned it. Among the seals and important-looking hieroglyphics she read that, by decree of the general commanding the Nationalist armies in that region, the Yellow River was closed to all traffic.

"Do you admit now that you have committed this crime?" thundered the little policeman.

"Of course I have," retorted Gladys angrily.

"We are refugees from Shansi proceeding to



The children who made the dangerous trek across the mountains soon recovered when they reached safety at a refugee centre

Sian. There are a hundred children with me. You didn't expect us to wait on the other side to be killed, did you?"

Outside, the chant of the children went on monotonously. "Let her out! Let her out!" And now they had found the windows, and a dozen small faces were peering through and tapping the panes with their fingers.

"It is plain," the magistrate said, "that if this woman has committed an offence, it is of the smallest technical nature." He smiled at her. "I think I might be able to help you. Every morning a train leaves Mien Chu and travels along the river. At least it will take you some distance on your journey to Sian. Tomorrow morning go to the station with your children and get on the train."

Gladys thanked him, and took the children back to the refugee centre. In the evening she assembled them in the courtyard and addressed them. "You all know what a train is, don't you?" she said. There was an excited bubble

of conversation. No, most of them didn't know what a train was. Gladys demonstrated with sound effects.

"Tomorrow you will line up with clean hands and faces, and anyone with a dirty face or dirty hands will not be allowed on the train."

They were all up at dawn next morning, eagerly tying up their bundles, scrambling to be first at the great stone basin full of water in the temple courtyard, so that faces and hands should be the requisite colour required by Ai-weh-deh. They lined up to have their basins filled with steaming millet, scooped the thick mixture into open mouths with dextrous chopsticks, and with astounding co-operation formed a long crocodile before Gladys had even tied up her own bedding. . . .

The station was a long raised piece of concrete three feet above the track. Any roof it possessed had been blasted away, long before, by falling bombs. A hundred yards from the platform the railway lines curved out of sight between a jumble of houses. It was upon this bend—on being told that from this direction the train would appear—that a hundred pairs of eyes were focused.

Gladys lined them up in three straggling ranks. After a few minutes, far off, there came the noise of the train. One hundred children tensed, a little uneasy. Those were very strange noises. Even in the distance it sounded like the grandfather of all the dragons in the world.

The noise grew greater. Couplings clanked as buffers met; brakes screamed in steely anguish, and round the corner, steaming and blowing and snorting, came the hideous iron monster.

There was one loud anguished squeal of terror from the children. The ranks dissolved: panic was contagious. Bundles, basins, chopsticks flew into the air. Children fled in every direction. By the time the train was still twenty-five yards away, not a single child remained on the platform. The wooden carriages clattered to a halt. The engines subsided into heavy, steamy breathing, and Gladys tried to collect her charges.

THE older boys and girls, already ashamed of their sudden panic, were rounding up the younger ones, plaintively protesting that they had only run away to catch the others. One batch of eight-year-olds was found to have raced all the way back to the refugee centre. Children were retrieved from under boxes and bales, from every conceivable hiding-place within two hundred yards of the station.

Group by group, Gladys assembled them once more on the platform. Fortunately the train seemed to be in no hurry to go anywhere at all. The carriages were simply wooden boxes with roofs on. There were no seats. And there were many other refugee passengers with their bundles and basins.

She managed to pile all the children into one long carriage, and when, an hour later, the train jogged slowly into motion, the children began to enjoy their experience.

There was only one other moment of panic. About two hours after the train set off, an elderly Chinese, sitting a few yards from Gladys and surrounded by children, produced a stub of candle from his pocket. He placed it on the floor and tenderly lit it. At least three little boys immediately blew it out. At that moment the train plunged into a tunnel. The darkness was impenetrable; the wails and panic were beyond description. The elderly gentleman, after a minute or two, succeeded in relighting the candle.

For four days they stayed aboard the train as it rattled forward in slow, short stages. At intervals along the line there were refugee feeding-camps where they were given food.

Gladys dozed a great deal of the time. It wasn't that she felt ill; it was as if a general tiredness had settled into her bones. She had

Continued on page 24



Ninepence—whom Gladys bought from a child dealer when she was small—got married. . . . And "Grand-mother" Aylward posed with her and her son in Shanghai



Less, another of Gladys's "children," was shot by the Chinese Communists while a student at Nanking university

At a Thames-side factory one afternoon a few months ago the loading of submarine cable for the new £12 million telephone line across the bed of the Atlantic was held up. The cable, made in continuous 185-mile lengths, had to be fed out from the manufacturer's storage tanks over sets of pulleys and down into the hold of the cable-laying ship Monarch.

A last-minute check showed that bad machining on one set of pulleys would cause friction which might damage the protective covering of the cable. The risk was slight but as the cable will have to withstand for years a pressure of two and a half tons per square inch 2,500 fathoms down it was one which could not be taken. The eight-ton block of pulleys would have to be replaced by a new set. The cable firm did not have the labour to do this job safely and quickly. Under a penalty clause in their contract every day's delay would mean a heavy financial loss.

Thomas Smedley, a director of Machinery Installation, of Acton, took five minutes to hear the problem, to decide that his firm could tackle it at once, and to brief one of his most experienced foremen, Pat Dorrigan.

All that night, in cold, lashing rain that numbed their fingers, Dorrigan and his men struggled with the eight ton block of pulleys. As they were raising the new set into position the steel wire taking the strain slipped off the drum and became wedged between the side of the drum and the frame of the winch.

"We were working by floodlight," says Dorrigan. "In the uneven light it might have gone unnoticed until it was too late and the lot had come crashing down. In the nick of time I realized something was wrong. We lowered away and started again." By morning the job was complete. Loading went ahead as planned, the ship sailed on time. Testing of the new cable began on the appointed date.

Smedley and his partner, Ian MacLean, founded their firm in 1946 with a capital of £100. Their ability to deal quickly with all manner of awkward industrial odd jobs has brought them in ten years from nothing to an annual turnover of £250,000.

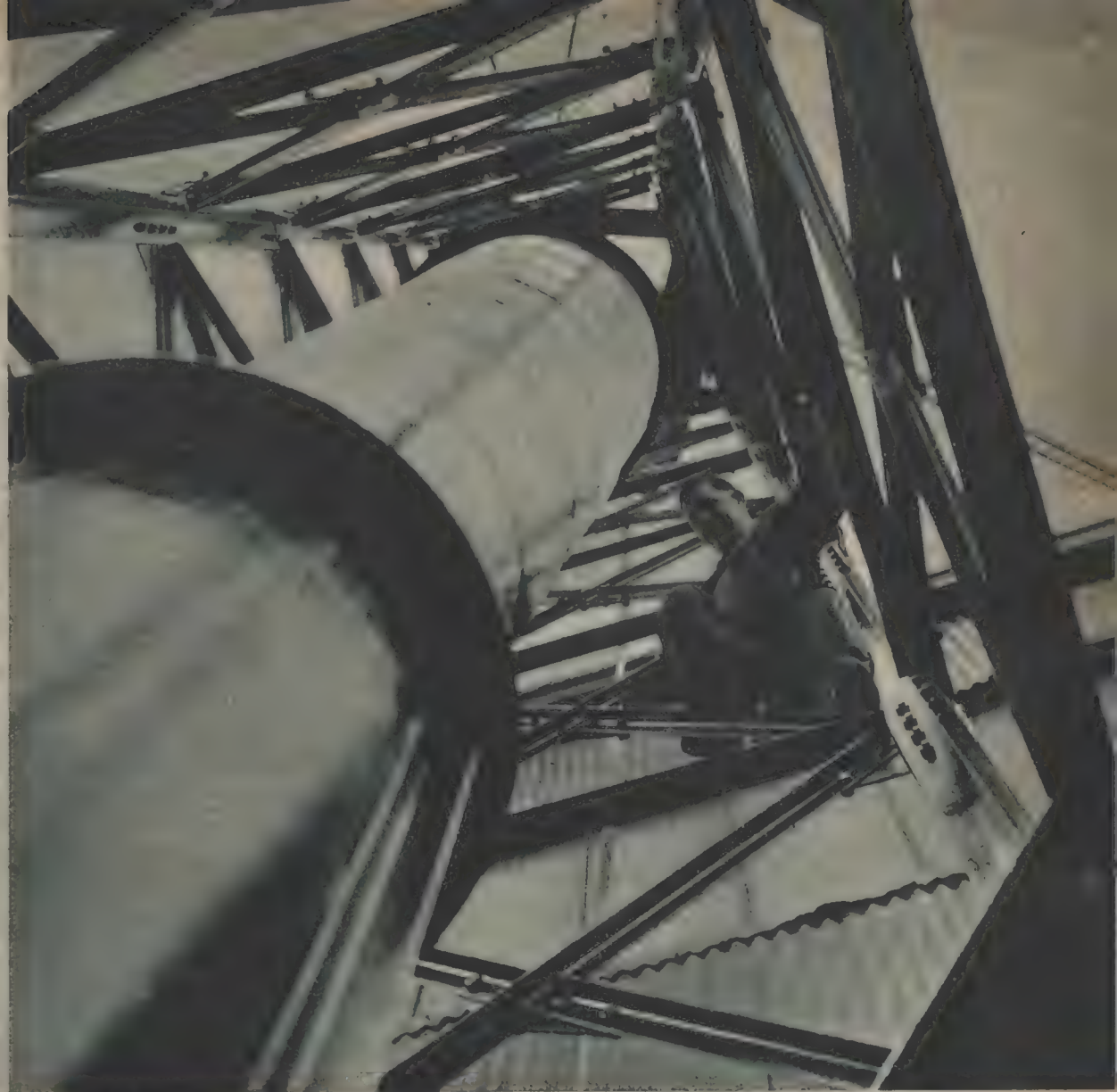
"No job is too big or too awkward for us," says Smedley. As a result Dorrigan and his men may find themselves working anywhere from a cathedral to a ship in dry dock.

Two years ago in a letter which gave no details the firm was asked whether it could lift 17½ tons 250 feet straight up. Smedley said that he thought it could be done, and then found that the job had to be done inside Liverpool Cathedral, where the great bourdon bell was to be raised into the belfry.

"It was one of the most nerve-racking jobs we have ever tackled," says Smedley. The cathedral authorities were afraid of damage to the valuable structure of the building, and Smedley took out an insurance policy for £100,000 to cover the firm against any such damage. Specially designed lifting equipment was taken 250 feet up the outside of the tower and in through the belfry window. Before the bell could be moved into position for lifting, the floor of the nave had to be strengthened with iron plates and railway lines. To make sure the brand-new wire would run true over the winch when lifting began, Dorrigan suspended the bell a few inches above the floor of the nave for a whole weekend to stretch the wire.

"The winding gear had to be dead centre, there was no room for error," says Smedley. The extreme diameter of the bell was 9 ft. 6 in. The hole in the roof it had to pass through was ten feet. The rim of the bell was very brittle and the slightest chip would have meant sending it back for retuning. Turning the winch by hand, Dorrigan and his men worked fourteen hours before the bell was in position.

Smedley's men have to be prepared to work at considerable heights, for which they get



Patrick Dorrigan and his men get danger money for working at heights. One man owes his life to Dorrigan, who saved him by grabbing his hair while a hundred feet up

Handymen with tons of trouble

by REX GRIZELL

Raising bells, scaling a chimney or shifting a giant press—danger makes their working day worth while

danger money, and to handle weights up to 130 tons in one piece. "It is very hazardous work," says Smedley. "So far we have had no fatalities, but we get a few broken bones and split heads." On average jobs the firm insures for £10,000 against injury to its workmen, and for £25,000 against damage to property.

Dorrigan once needed help to carry out work a hundred feet up a brick chimney stack. The only other man on the site who was used to heights had never worked above seventy feet, but he insisted that he would be all right. Dorrigan climbed on to the small platform a hundred feet up.

There was a strong wind blowing. Looking back, Dorrigan saw that the man was gripping the sides of the ladder with whitened knuckles and seemed unable to climb over to the platform. Dorrigan realized the man was petrified

with fear, and in the same moment the man's eyes closed and his hands began to slip. Dorrigan darted forward as the man swayed out into space. Holding on with one hand, Dorrigan managed to grab him by the hair and pull him back against the ladder. Then, keeping the man's body between himself and the ladder, Dorrigan took him down. The man was unable to help himself, and Dorrigan was a quarter of an hour getting him down the ladder. "It's lucky he wasn't wearing a cap," says Dorrigan.

On another job, Dorrigan was lowering a 110-ton press on to a special steel and concrete platform in a pit. Three of his men were in the pit, guiding it down.

As the foundations took the weight, one side gave way, and the press crashed down just above the heads of the men in the pit, trapping them. As it inched down through the crumbling

concrete towards them, Dorrigan passed the men some stout timber which they wedged beneath the press to check its movement while they crawled out. A moment after they were out, the huge press settled farther and the twelve-by-twelve oak timbers snapped like matchsticks, and flew in all directions. "A fair bit of damage was done but no one was hurt. It was one of our narrowest escapes," says Dorrigan.

"We need tough men on this work," says Smedley. "Our foremen have to be able to handle and earn the respect of the toughest."

Dorrigan often has to work at night, at weekends and during factory meal times in order to avoid any hold-up in production. During the summer holiday season, when many factories are closed, Dorrigan and his men work from twelve to sixteen hours a day for weeks on end.

"The secret of speed in this work is to reduce the number of operations by moving the machine in one great lump if possible, or if it's very large, in the fewest possible pieces," says Smedley.

These tactics often frighten factory engineers, who fear that either the machine or the structure of the factory will be damaged. Smedley frequently has to spend hours persuading customers that Dorrigan can really do the job as he proposes to do it. "On one job the engineer estimated that it would take two weeks to have a machine working in its new position. It would have taken four weeks if we had done it his way. Dorrigan did it in four days."

When lowering heavy machines Dorrigan uses wire ropes to control side-to-side movement. The loose end of the rope is wound once or twice round anything which seems to be firmly fixed in the ground, usually roof stanchions bedded in the concrete floor of the factory. A couple of men holding the end of the rope can allow it to slide round the stanchion an inch or two at a time or check the movement altogether.

Sometimes Dorrigan has to use whatever else he thinks will take the strain, from fence posts to other machines bedded in concrete. Once he "tied off" to an apple tree in an orchard next to the factory. As he started to lower the machine, the strain began to



uproot the tree. "I had plenty of wire rope so I belayed round the next tree as well, and then the one next to that for safety."

The smallest job Dorrigan has tackled was moving a four-hundred-weight safe down three flights of rickety stairs. "It was also one of the most awkward." The firm tackled its biggest job two years ago when it dismantled a huge excavator weighing eight hundred tons, which had been standing idle for seven years on an iron ore site in the Midlands, moved it forty miles, and re-erected it.

"We had to build a railway line a mile long from the site to the nearest branch line," says Smedley. "The arm alone weighed seventy-five tons, was one hundred and twenty feet long, ten feet wide, and sixteen feet high. On the branch line we had to take up the track in six places, move out tons of earth, and re-lay the track at lower level, so that the arm could be taken under bridges." The contract price for the whole job was £26,000. "It would

have cost more than £300,000 to buy a new excavator of that type."

Often danger lurks in the simplest jobs. Dorrigan once went up a thirty-foot ladder inside a factory, leaving a man to hold the bottom. The factory floor was greasy, and the man thought the ladder would be safer with his weight actually on it, so he stood up on the bottom rung. At the top, Dorrigan leaned out to one side to fix some tackle. The ladder slid and fell. The man at the bottom was thrown along the factory floor and just missed a working bandsaw which would have cut him in half. Dorrigan fell forty feet, passing between the concrete edge of a machine pit and the iron catwalk round the machine itself. He was unhurt except for a slight cut on the head.

Dorrigan, a stocky, blue-eyed Irishman from Leitrim, has been nine years with the firm. His work has taken him all over Great Britain and Ireland. When he leaves his wife and children at his West London home he rarely

knows when he will be back. He may be called from job to job at a moment's notice.

When an explosion in a South Wales mill producing cattle-cake damaged a crushing machine and wrecked ducting, Smedley called Dorrigan from Newcastle upon Tyne at a moment's notice to take out the machine. The job was so urgent that after his five-hundred-mile journey Dorrigan went straight from the station to the factory. He and his men changed from travelling to working clothes in the factory, and worked all through the night lowering the machine three floors. "From lunch on the day we set out until next morning, when the job was finished, we had nothing but a cup of tea and a few buns," says Dorrigan.

SOMETIMES unforeseeable factors add to the dangers of the work. During the war a huge American press was being transported through Britain on its way to France, when France surrendered. No one knew what to do with the three-hundred-ton machine. Eventually it was off-loaded in a railway siding at Doncaster, and a small factory was built round it.

Three years ago Dorrigan had the job of moving it. Since the factory had been built round the press there was no way of taking it out except to knock down part of the side wall and take off part of the roof. Dorrigan and his men did this and began to move the press out on to a railway wagon immediately next to the wall. Behind the wagon on the other side of the track was a large hut used as a checking office.

As the seventy-five tons of the top part of the press bore down on the wagon the ground beneath the railway lines subsided under the weight, and the wagon tilted towards the hut. Dorrigan had a man on a winch with a retaining wire to act as a brake, but when the huge weight of the press shifted, the man lost his nerve and let go. The winch began to pay off its load. The press slid across the wagon.

Dorrigan realized what was happening and snatched up a steel guy rope attached to the press and belayed it round a stanchion in the factory. This stopped the movement of the press. "A few seconds more and the hut would have been smashed like a nut," he says. THE END

The small woman

Continued from page 22

been almost three weeks on the road now, soaked by the rains and chilled by the winds; she had slept badly and gone without food for days on end: it was only to be expected, she told herself, that she didn't feel as well as normally.

At the small village of Tien Sha, the train stopped. It went no farther. Here the undulating plain ended and the mountains rose steeply ahead of them. A thin stream of refugees passed up through the rocky passes; old men, young women, fathers, mothers, families laden with bundles, all fleeing from the Japanese.

They begged food in the village, and Gladys looked at the high peaks ahead. Their only hope was to reach Madame Chiang Kai-shek's refugee help organization in Sian. Even though the city was still many days' journey away, somehow she had to summon up sufficient reserves of strength to get there. But those mountains looked so high and cruel.

Next day they started for the mountains.

At first the trail ran upwards. They were all practically barefooted, and the sharp flints cut their feet. For four hours they toiled upwards, the youngsters scrambling ahead, Gladys and the older girls coming up more slowly.

Late in the afternoon, they reached a village where the children drank the water left after millet has been cooked, and the villagers gave them rice cakes and other odd fragments of food. Gladys drank some tea and felt better. The people were kindly.

It would take them two more days

to cross the mountains and reach Tang-kuan, they told her. There were other villages on the track where they might get food.

Slowly she struggled to her feet. Another high ridge stood up against the skyline in front of them.

Another hour's climbing and the five-year-olds were already hanging round her coat tails. Four of the fourteen-year-old boys carried them in turns. Gladys carried one also.

The progress of the entire party was very slow now. At nightfall, in the overhang of a cliff they found a little shelter and huddled together, seeking warmth.

As soon as it was light they set off again, the youngsters tearing off ahead. All around were bare peaks running away in all directions, intimidating and desolate. All that day they filed painfully onwards. It was in the afternoon, seated on a rock for one of their frequent rests, that the break came.

Her face streaked with lines where the sweat had coursed down the white mountain dust, Gladys stared round at the children. The eight- and nine-year-olds were still ahead, but two dozen of the little ones with mournful faces, the fives and sixes and sevens, were gathered round her, almost too dumb to plead to be carried or be given food or drink. The girls were slumped in attitudes of utter dejection on the rocks. Even Liang and Teh—the two boys who usually acted as scouts—sat glumly, their chins in their hands, worn out by carrying the small ones for hour after hour.

It was then that Gladys began sobbing aloud, abandoning herself to grief, sobbing because she had no strength to stay her tears, sobbing from sheer weakness and exhaustion. She was

convinced that they were all finished; that they would all die in the mountains. The children sobbed with her, and the little boys coming back down the trail stood open-mouthed and then, also influenced by the contagion of grief, they began to wail also. For many minutes the sound of their distress echoed in the valley. When it was over, Gladys wiped her face with her coat sleeve, and sniffed.

"A good cry is always good for you!" she said stoutly. "Now, that's enough, all of you. We'll sing a hymn, and while we're singing it we shall march down the track to that big buttress of rock."

Just before sunset they came upon another village and the kindly people ransacked their houses for food. The village elder wagged his thin goatee beard at Gladys and said simply: "You have many mouths to feed, but who can resist you!"

They camped that night in a cave at the edge of the village.

THE third day was a repetition of the others, except that they found no more villages and ate no more food; and that night, as they crouched on the mountainside, it poured with rain.

Next day they came down through the mountains, and on to Tang-kuan, where a refugee organization was to be found.

Two women were in charge of the steaming pots, and the children clamoured around them.

Gladys learned from the women that a railway line led from Tang-kuan to Huason, but no trains ran along it. The line passed close to the river and the Japanese occupied the opposite bank. She and the children would have to go on walking. The news irritated

her almost beyond reason, and to be irritated was so unlike her. When two men came into the courtyard a little later and began to ask questions, *Where had she come from? and Where was she making for?* she answered them abruptly.

"We wish to help you," they said. "The women here have told us about you. Every now and then a train *does* go through to Huason, which is on the way to Sian. It carries no passengers, only coal. It starts in the middle of the night and it is still dark when it passes the Japanese positions on the other side of the river. Sometimes, however, they fire at it."

"You mean we might be able to go on it?" she said eagerly. "When does it leave?"

"Tonight, in a few hours." The men said they would return when the train was ready, and tell her. She lay down and slept. . . .

Each truck in the train was piled with coal above its sides, and the children were placed between lumps of coal. The men wedged more lumps around them to prevent them falling off. Gladys allotted two older children to each truck so that they could watch the young ones.

She climbed up herself. There were six small ones wedged on her truck; all seemed fairly safe. A few minutes later the train began to move. Gladys lay back, her head against a lump of coal. And presently she slept.

When she woke, dawn was breaking. The children were waking also, and she could hear their delighted screams all along the trucks.

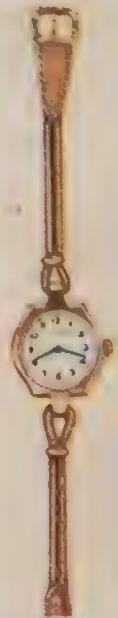
Little San, five years old, waking two feet away from Gladys, stared at Lufu rubbing his eyes, and screamed

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BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE

WA-1

with laughter. "Lufu, you've gone black in the night!" And Lufu screamed back at him in happy and concerted agreement. "And you've gone black in the night, too! Ai-weh-deh's black! We've all gone black!"

The Japanese had not fired at the train, or if they had, Gladys had not heard them. She felt refreshed, but weaker.

In the early afternoon they came to Huason. In one of the temples there a refugee organization had been set up. Gladys and the children were given food, and she could sleep properly at last. Without protest she drank medicine which the children brought to her. Liang and Ninepence insisted that she drink it.

They had told the Buddhist priests that Ai-weh-deh was ill and demanded medicine from them; the priests provided herbs of various kinds which they had to boil in water, and give the liquid to Ai-weh-deh when it was cool. It had a bitter taste but was not unpalatable.

She did not really remember how many days they spent in Huason. She only knew that it had been March, 1940, when they set out and now it was late in April. The trains ran spasmodically to Sian, and the woman who looked after the refugee centre told her they would see she got aboard a train for Sian when the time came.

One morning they helped her to steer the children down to the station and into the carriages. Gladys did not remember if the journey took three or four or even five days.

BUT at last one noontime she was aware of a communal excitement among all the refugees. She struggled up, and could see the walls and pagodas beyond the station and a jumble of low buildings. The children were already piling out on to the platform and she realized that she must follow them. Outside the station she assembled them into their familiar crocodile.

"As we march through the gates of Sian we shall sing a hymn," she announced.

An old Chinese lifted his head as she spoke. He looked at her through shadowed, rheumy eyes. "Woman," he said, "you will never get into Sian. The gates are closed. No more refugees are allowed into the city."

She did not believe him. She could not believe him. The mute faces of the children were turned up towards her. All these long weeks she had sustained them with the mirage of Sian.

"Where shall we go then?" she said desperately. "Where shall we go?"

The old man pointed. "There is a refugee camp near the walls yonder. They will feed you."

Gladys led the children to the camp and, while the helpers were feeding them, she marched by herself along the road to the city.

As she got closer she could see that the walls were high and buttressed. The massive wooden gates were barred and shut.

A watcher from the walls above shouted. "Woman, go away! The city is packed with refugees. No one comes into the city. Woman, go away!" She leaned her face against the hard surface of the door and wept a little. So long a journey!

She walked slowly back to rejoin the children, not knowing what to tell them. But they had news for her instead. Representatives of Madame Chiang's "New Life" movement had made arrangements to care for the children at Fufeng, a nearby city.

"But how do we get there?" asked Gladys. "We've been travelling for a month already."

"By train," they said. "Tomorrow, we shall put you all on a train to Fufeng."

Fufeng belonged to ancient China. The streets were narrow and choked with shops and shoppers, with beggars, mules and carts. A huge disused temple housed the orphans of "New Life."

Gladys was given a little room in the temple, and the children went backwards and forwards through it, coming in all the time to show off their new clothes or receive comfort for a



bruise or just to tell "Mother" the latest news.

It was all rather hazy to her. She did not know quite what she was going to do. The children were delivered; they would be taken care of. She had to earn her living somehow or other.

Then she met two Chinese women who ran a small Christian mission in Fufeng. They said they would be glad of her help; they were going out to a nearby village that very afternoon—would she care to accompany them?

Nothing, said Gladys, would give her more pleasure.

As she walked with them along the sunbaked road with the green wheat fields stretching away on each side, her feet did not seem to want to go down in the right places. When they reached the first house she was given a basin of food. But the food wouldn't go to her mouth; somehow she could not control her hands even to perform such a simple act.

It was nothing, the women said, as they led her to a room off the courtyard; she must rest for a while.

She stretched out wearily on the hard bed, her Bible by her side. When they came to fetch her an hour later, she was raving in delirium.

It is fairly certain that the women must have prevailed upon the Chinese peasants to put the sick woman in their ox-cart and take her the long journey to the Scandinavian-American Mission at Hsing P'ing, from which she was taken to the hospital at Sian. Many people helped to nurse her back to health, and opened their homes to her for her convalescence.

When she was progressing favourably, she did not want to exist on charity any longer; she knew that she had to work for her living, and provide for her five adopted children.

They joined her from Fufeng, and went to school in Sian, and slowly Gladys improved. She made friends in

Sian, and she earned a little money. A few pounds reached her from her parents in England. She worked for the refugee aid movement; she taught English to two policemen and two yamen officials; and when two Christian men from Shansi arrived, she started a church for refugees, in a disused factory. They took tiny collections and eked out a living.

Linnan, her Chinese fiancé, who was a high officer in Chiang Kai-shek's intelligence service, came down to visit Sian, and she was glad to see him. He implored her to marry him, and go with him to Chungking where he was now posted but, somehow, their relationship had altered. All the practical obstructions to a mixed marriage were increasingly obvious.

But it was not only that; something had happened to her feelings. She did not know what it was, only that things were different. All this, in tears, she tried to tell Linnan; all this, in the despair of his love, he tried to brush aside, and said that it would be better when she was well. In Chungking, he said, he would have high rank; they could make a home there and be happy; the children could go to a school there. But it was no use.

She said goodbye to him at the station outside Sian. The war swept him away and she never saw him again.

The children went away to school. Ninepence got married, and Gladys was left alone. She heard that an American Methodist Mission, run by Dr. Olin Stockwell in western Kansu, were working with thousands of refugees from the north, and that they wanted an evangelist who spoke the Shansi dialect. She went there, did all sorts of work, and became great friends with Esther and Olin Stockwell.

Dr. Stockwell was eventually arrested when the Communists swept down into Kansu, and was kept in prison for two years. In a book entitled *Meditations from a Prison Cell*, he wrote:

"I remember a little pint-sized missionary lady from England who had been with us out in West China for a year or so. She went into a leper colony to minister to lepers' needs. She preached and served with such enthusiasm that she brought new hope to that whole group of lepers."

"Before she came, the lepers had been quarrelsome and jealous, fighting among themselves. Many of them felt that life was hopeless. She came to tell them of a God who loved them. The tone of that colony changed."

She was still ill. The Japanese had once beaten her up in a courtyard, inflicting severe internal injuries which grew more serious as the years passed. The European doctors she consulted told her that her only chance was to return to England and be operated upon there. But she had no money, and that was quite impossible; her chief hope was that one day she could return to her beloved Yangcheng, her "home" village in Shansi.

Some time later she went up to Shensi to hand over one of the Methodist missions to a group of Americans who had been driven out of

Northern Shansi, and had come round to the west to continue their work.

She was chatting to one of them as they walked along the road to the mission, when they passed a refugee woman from Shansi whom Gladys knew slightly. The woman hailed her in the Shansi dialect and Gladys replied in the same idiom. The American looked down at her with interest.

"You've been in that part of China?" he asked.

"Yes, I was up in Shansi."

"I suppose," he said, "you didn't hear about that woman missionary called Ai-weh-deh, who ran around behind the Japanese lines years ago?"

"Yes, I knew her," said Gladys quietly. "That was me."

"Ma'am, I'm honoured!" said the American.

He asked when she had last been home. She didn't understand what he meant. "Back to England," he said.

She smiled. "What chance have I of going back to England when I don't even know where tomorrow's dinner's coming from?"

"How long have you been here?"

"Seventeen years."

"But you'd like to go home, wouldn't you?"

"It would be nice to see them all again, I suppose," she said wistfully, "but it's quite impossible."

A few weeks later the American rejoined his wife in Shanghai. She had been administering a fund raised in the United States to repatriate German Protestant missionaries and orphans to Germany. Now all the repatriations were completed, and a few hundred dollars still remained.

The American told his wife, "I've something very useful for you to do with all those dollars you've got left."

The first that Gladys Aylward knew about it all was when one of the Chinese elders, a cheerful, friendly old man, came up to the village in the mountains where she was staying. He jogged down the village street and, seeing her standing at the mission door, waved a letter at her and shouted: "I've been sent to find you. You're going back to England."

"What are you talking about?"

His face was one wide grin. "All you have to do is to go to Shanghai and your fare will be paid to England. You're going home. Now what are you crying about, woman? Isn't that news good enough for you?"

It did not work out quite as quickly as that. It took another three years of worry, indecision and heartache before Gladys Aylward finally sailed for England.

She did not want to leave China; all she loved was there; England was a strange, far-away place; and although her five legally adopted children were now young men and women making their own way in the world, it was still a difficult decision. All the children she had brought through the mountains from Yangcheng considered that she was their mother—they still do to this day—and were writing for advice and help, and calling to see her, no matter in what part of China she lived. At the Stockwells', there was always a procession of young men and women to see her.

Only after long consideration, she decided that God would wish her to return to Britain, and therefore she should go.

Since then, during the years she has been in England, she has been travelling around the country, lecturing and preaching at churches and schools and mission halls. She has been a second mother to scores of Chinese students from Singapore and Hongkong arriving in Britain to study; and she has played a large part in helping to set up a hostel in Liverpool for Chinese nationals and Chinese seamen.

As always, she has lived frugally, and simply, and from day to day.

THE END

"The Small Woman," by Alan Burgess, is to be published in April by Evans Bros. at 16s.

WINNER OF COVER CONTEST NO. 12



MR. W. BANKS, of 17 North Lonsdale Road, Ulverston, Lancashire, has won £100 in JOHN BULL's cover contest No. 12. His title for Mays's painting of the five young carol singers and a dog (December 8) is: **THE DOMINANT SIXTH**.

The winner of the extra £900 for the best title in the series will be announced next week.

Man-eater of Kempekarai

Continued from page 12

owner of a coil of such hair. This we borrowed, combed out, and fixed around the coconut to simulate the long hair of a villager.

The dummy looked sufficiently realistic to attract the man-eater, if only he did not watch it long enough to begin wondering at its uncanny stillness.

That night I applied fresh dressing to my wounds, and next morning helped myself to another shot of penicillin. I was thankful to note that no undue inflammation had occurred.

By 8 p.m. half a dozen willing helpers and I had trundled the cartwheel to the crossing I had in mind. Here we excavated a hole nearly four feet across by about four feet deep in the soft sand.

Inside, I found I could adopt only a semi-crouched position, which was going to be very uncomfortable indeed. The only compensation it offered was that it saved me from sitting, which would have been most uncomfortable.

We placed the dummy with its back to a tamarind tree, some fifteen feet away, so that it would be visible to the tiger from any point along the stream bed or on either section of the track.

Lastly, we collected some of the larger boulders, and, as I stood guard with my rifle, Ranga and Byra gathered brushwood and debris for camouflaging the wheel.

When eventually I got into the hole, the wheel was just a couple of inches above my head. There was a space of six inches between the ground level and the wheel through which I could fire in the direction of the dummy.

For safety's sake, I had arranged that the men should return to Kempekarai in a body, and only come back next morning. I would be imprisoned all night in the hole, as the weight of the cartwheel with the boulders above it was too great for me to lift unaided.

It was 4.30 p.m. when I entered my voluntary prison. It was almost five when I found myself alone. The heat inside the hole was stifling. I removed my coat and shirt.

Peeping above the level of the ground, I could clearly distinguish the dummy and a wide extent of the background. A clump of "henna" bushes grew half-way down the sloping bank behind the dummy. A slight movement in that direction caught my eye, and I found it was due to the twitching, outstretched ear of a beautiful spotted stag. The stag gazed a full ten minutes at that still dummy, then appeared to lose interest. It crossed the open track and vanished into the jungle.

A pair of pea-fowl then came strutting along the track. The cock-bird stopped, fanned out his tail and rustled the quills in display to his admiring spouse. Female-like, she kept one eye on him and the other elsewhere. Anyway, she saw the dummy, took a short run, and sailed into the air.

The cock, chagrined at her failure to appreciate his beauty, lowered his tail and saw the dummy too. A much heavier bird than the hen, he flapped wildly and desperately in an effort to take off, his wings beating loudly on the still evening air before he managed to clear the surrounding bushes and follow his more wary partner to safety.

It was pitch-dark where I sat and even the dummy was hidden under the shadows of the tamarind tree beneath which it was propped. I reckoned the moonlight would not reach that spot till after ten.

At about nine o'clock I heard the noisy snuffing and deep-throated gurgle of a slothbear, as it wended its clumsy way down the stream. It almost fell over the outlying debris we had placed on the stream bed to give me warning of the tiger's approach, and then saw the neatly heaped boulders placed upon the cartwheel.

I could have read the thoughts that crossed the little brain beneath the shaggy black hair. *Here's a chance to find some luscious fat grubs, or a beetle*

MY BROTHER

Humphrey

As a child, Humphrey had a fiendish sense of humour. He used to play in the school orchestra and, on one occasion, he noticed that a fellow instrumentalist was concentrating desperately on counting the bars before his entry with a trumpet solo. My brother caught his eye and began mouthing a different set of numbers, reducing the poor fellow to uncontrollable giggles. He missed his cue. Humphrey was not asked to rejoin the orchestra next term.

Even as a small child my brother was surrounded by musical instruments. When he was three our nannie gave him a recorder, and he was very quickly able to pick out a tune on it. But Humphrey disliked nannies and became adept at forcing them to leave.

As a boy, Humphrey was not interested in sport, but he managed to persuade the scorer, who ran the junior cricket matches at his school, to mark the score book before the game started. His contribution to the game was always "Not out . . . 8."

This consistent score proved to be ideal; just high enough to show he was trying but not impressive enough to earn him promotion. With his innings thus predestined, Humphrey was free to indulge his enthusiasm for music to his heart's content.

My sister and I used to ride quite a lot. Humphrey disliked riding, and on one of the few



occasions he was persuaded on to a horse he nearly landed in the river. The horse was galloping towards the bank, my brother screaming his head off, until the school music master heroically headed the horse off.

From then on Humphrey took great delight in trying to shake us out of our complacency about riding. He once climbed to the top of the fire escape, wrapped himself in a huge white sheet and suddenly appeared as my sister and I rode by. The horses were terrified at the sight of this apparition gesticulating wildly above them, and to my brother's delight we both fell off.

The first car Humphrey had was a very old Austin Seven, almost falling to bits. As soon as he was old enough he took his driving test in it. The examiner found himself unable to see through the passenger window as the glass was so badly splintered, but, undeterred, he started asking my brother questions.

Suddenly the car started to race downhill, the door flew open, and the poor man was nearly thrown out. Despite this, however, Humphrey managed to pass the test.

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 31

or two; perhaps a nest of white ants, or a beehive built by the small yellow bees that can hardly sting a big bear like me.

With those thoughts the bear began clearing away the boulders that so carefully anchored my cartwheel.

"Shoo!" I whispered in an undertone. "Get away, you interfering . . . !"

The bear heard my voice, and stopped. A few minutes' silence followed, and then it started at the stones again.

"Out! Shoo!" I whispered. The bear stopped scraping with his paw, climbed over the boulders, and looked down between the spokes at me.

"Get out, you idiot!" I growled.

"*Wr-oof! Wr-oof! Wr-oof!*" it answered, as it scrambled, helter-skelter, over the boulders, stumbled over the debris, scampered up the bank and crashed away between the dried bamboos.

Hardly ten minutes had passed after the bear's noisy departure when I heard the soft tread of the padded foot of some heavy animal, like the very muffled impact of a soft cushion when it is thrown on to a sofa.

The tiger had come and in his silent way was negotiating the fringe of the debris we had scattered on the stream bed behind me. He was picking his way carefully across it.

The moon had already risen, but its beams had not yet reached the shadows cast by the heavy foliage of the tamarind tree. The dummy was not visible to me, but I knew that the tiger could see it clearly.

There was silence for a time—how long I could not say. Then came the clink of a stone as it rolled above my head. Nobody had anticipated an attack in that direction; but my recent

visitor, the bear, had already shown that the unexpected could happen. Now the unexpected was being repeated by the presence of the tiger above me.

What had caused it to ignore the dummy, and come straight to the spot where I lay, was a mystery. Whatever the reason, the tiger was now barely two yards away, and above me.

Suddenly, I heard the vague sound caused by the tiger's breathing. Then he stepped gracefully over one of the big boulders that held down the wheel, and peered down at me.

I screwed myself around, as best I could, and now lay half on my back, gazing up at the tiger. The rifle I had drawn inwards and backwards, but it was impossible to point the barrel completely upwards. The most I could manage was an angle of a little more than sixty degrees with the bottom of the hole.

Unfortunately, the tiger was not approaching me from the direction in which the muzzle was pointing, but was standing behind it.

THEN events moved quickly. The tiger's features, dimly visible, contorted into a snarl. A succession of deep-throated growls issued from his cavernous chest, and, lying down upon the cartwheel, he attempted to rake me with the claws of a foreleg, which he inserted between the spokes of the wheel.

I knew that these claws would rip my face and head to ribbons if they only made contact, so, sinking as low into the hole as possible, I struggled desperately to turn the muzzle of the rifle towards the tiger.

All this took only seconds to happen. The tiger growled and came a little farther on to the wheel. The

muzzle of my rifle struck his shoulder and I pressed the trigger.

The explosion within that confined space was deafening. The tiger roared hideously as he catapulted backwards. During the next thirty seconds he bit the boulders, the wheel and even the sand, as he gave forth roar after roar of agony.

Then I heard him fall amid the debris, pick himself up, fall again, get up and finally crash into the bushes that bordered the little stream. He was still roaring, and continued to do so for quite fifteen minutes more as he staggered away into the jungle.

Finally silence, total and abysmal, fell over the forest. After the pandemonium that had just reigned, every creature, including the insects, decided that it was wise to hide till with the passage of time they forgot their fright.

The hours passed. At one in the morning a stiff breeze began to blow over the hills, dark storm-clouds scudded across the sky. Not long afterwards, large raindrops penetrated between the spokes and splashed down upon me.

Then the deluge began, such as can be experienced only in tropical countries, and particularly forest regions with dense vegetation. I was soaked to the skin, and the water began to trickle down the sides of the hole. With that came the sudden realization that the stream, which had been dry, would soon be flowing with the spate of rainwater that was running into it from all directions along a hundred tributaries. I would be drowned like a rat in a hole.

I got on my hands and knees, placed my back to the wheel and pressed upwards with all my might. The wheel did not budge an inch. My helpers had done their work of protecting me from the tiger only too well. They had placed the heaviest boulders they could find around the circumference of the wheel, and I was unable to move them.

There was but one chance left, and that was to dig myself out through the six-inch wide gap we had made for me to fire through. Desperately, with both hands, I scooped the earth downwards into the hole, which was already half filled with water and sand; the damp sides were collapsing, making it very obvious that within the next few minutes, unless I got out quickly, cartwheel and boulders would all come down together on top of me.

WHEN I judged that there was sufficient room for my body to pass, I pushed the rifle between the spokes of the wheel and then rested it across them. Next I started squeezing myself through the opening I had just dug, wriggling in the sand and water like a stranded eel, till I finally struggled free on to the stream bed.

The rain continued to fall in torrents. I had no idea how far the tiger had gone, or in which direction. I picked up the rifle and began the return journey to Kempekarai. As I did so, I heard the dull roar of the spate of rainwater descending the stream bed from the hills.

Within a few minutes it arrived, a wall of foaming water over three feet high, carrying all before it. Logs of wood, uprooted trees, dead bamboos and flotsam of every description mingled with the crested, frothing waters. They reached the cartwheel and covered it; then cartwheel and boulders were swept away downstream along with the torrent. In less than five minutes the stream had become a raging river, over four feet deep.

Half-way to Kempekarai, I saw the flicker of an approaching light. A little later, I met a party of men that were carrying it—Ranga, Byra and a few stalwarts from the village. They had realized the danger I was in when the waters rose, and had risked meeting the man-eater to come to my rescue.

Next morning the sun shone brightly on the saturated forest. We returned to the site of my adventure the night before. All streams were flowing briskly, although they were now no more than two feet deep. There was no trace of the cartwheel. We combed both banks without finding any signs

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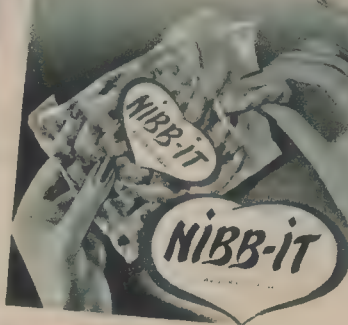
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of the tiger or his footprints. The torrential rain had only too effectively obliterated any blood-trail or pug-marks.

Two hours later, a depressed and disappointed group, we returned to Kempekarai. There I remained for three more days, hoping to hear news of the tiger, but there was none. Byra and Ranga felt it had died of its wounds, but I doubted this very much, as I knew that I had not been able to aim sufficiently well to score more than a mere raking shot.

My leave, taken to shoot this animal, had now elapsed. I left Kempekarai on the morning of the fourth day, instructing Ranga to remain behind to assist Byra in reconnoitring.

Ten days after I had returned to Bangalore I received a telegram stating that a pack-pony belonging to a forest guard of the Kodakarai Forest Lodge had been killed. Six days later, I received a second telegram, stating that a tiger had attacked the driver of a bullock cart that was the last of a convoy travelling from the small hamlet of Morappur towards Sopathy on the Chinar River.

This, no doubt, was the man-eater again. Within an hour I was on my way by car to Dharmapuri, where I picked up my two assistants. We continued to Pennagaram, where we left the car and made a cross-country trip of about twelve miles to Morappur, passing the Chinar River and Sopathy on the way.

I had meanwhile learned that the attacked cartman had saved his life by jumping from his cart on to the yoke and then between the two bulls that were hauling his cart. His shouts were taken up by other cartmen. The tiger had then made off.

Meanwhile, a party of travellers brought news that they had come across fresh tiger pug-marks, made the previous night, leading down the Chinar River.

We hurried back to Sopathy, and soon found the pug-marks. The water was running in the Chinar as a silvery stream, meandering from bank to bank, and in the soft, wet sand we clearly noticed that the tiger which had made the marks must have been limping badly.

A half-mile downstream in the direction in which the tiger had gone was a small, longish rock in mid-stream. It rose some four feet above the bed of the river and was about forty feet long by eight feet wide. I decided to sit on top of that rock that night, in the hope the tiger might make his way back up the Chinar and see me.

Borrowing Ranga's turban, old brown coat and dhoti, I donned all three, the coat and the dhoti above my own clothing, and seated myself on the rock by 5.30 p.m. As Ranga and Byra were afraid to return to Morappur alone, they spent the night high up in huge muthee trees bordering the Chinar.

The nights were dark, but the Chinar was about one hundred yards wide at this spot, and I relied upon the white sand to reflect the starlight, and to reveal the form of the tiger from whatever direction he might come. Apart from being handicapped by its lameness, I knew the tiger would not charge its prey from fifty yards, but would try to stalk as close as possible.

After testing my lighting equipment, I carefully loaded and cocked the .405, which I laid on the rock to my right. I had also brought my twelve bore double-barrel Jeffries with me. I laid the Jeffries, with L.G. slugs in the choke barrel and lethal-ball in the right, on the rock to my left.

At seven thirty it was dark; the reflecting whiteness of the sands of the Chinar surrounded my rock as if it were an island.

Just after nine there was a loud busting and crashing, and a tusker came down the bank, passed the rock where I sat and continued. There he met the current of breeze blowing down the river and caught scent of me. Banging the end of his trunk against the ground, and emitting a peculiar sound as if a sheet of zinc were being



rapidly bent in half, he turned around, smelled more of me and hurried into cover. Such is the behaviour of an elephant when it is not a rogue.

At eleven I was still keeping my watch in all directions. Then, half to the rear and my left, I sensed rather than saw a movement. Looking more intently, I could see nothing. No, wait! Was that not a blur against the faint greyish-white carpet of river sand? I looked away and then back again at the spot where I had just noticed the blur. It was not there.

That's funny, I thought. Are my eyes playing tricks, or are they just becoming tired?

Staring hard, I saw it again. Only it was much closer this time. Indeed, it was half-way between the farther bank and the rock on which I sat.

I could not now risk looking in any other direction until I had succeeded in defining this strange object. And

FLATTERY—1

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as I looked it seemed to stretch, to float towards me, growing longer and shorter at intervals, but making no sound whatever.

Then in a flash I realized what it was. The tiger was crawling towards me on his belly, silently, in quick, short motions, till he judged he was within range to make his final, murderous assault.

Perspiration poured down my face and neck; I trembled with terror and excitement. But this would not do; so, taking a deep breath and holding it, to allay the trembling, I drew the rifle up to my lap, raising it to my shoulder.

The tiger, now some twenty yards away, saw my movement and seemed to guess that his presence had been discovered. A thin black streak—his tail—moved behind him. The blur became compact as he gathered himself for the charge. My torch beam fell full on his snarling, flattened head. Then the rifle spoke, a second before he sprang.

With my bullet he rose and bounded forward. I owe my life to the fact that the torch did not go out, and I was

able to fire a second shot. Then he had reached the rock.

Because of his earlier wound, or my recent shots—at that moment I could not tell which—he failed to climb up to where I was sitting.

My third bullet, fired at point-blank range through the crown of his skull, stopped the charge that had all but succeeded in reaching me, and he rolled back on to the sands of the Chinar. . . .

Whistling on my way back to Sopathy, I gathered Ranga and Byra from the muthee trees on which they were sitting. Hearing my shots, and seeing my approach along the river bed, they gathered I had killed the tiger.

Next morning we found him to be an average-sized, somewhat thin male. My shot from beneath the cartwheel, fired seventeen days earlier, had done more damage than I had thought, for it had passed through his right shoulder, splintering the bone, and out again. But the wound was in good condition and I have little doubt that it would eventually have healed, although the tiger would have been a cripple.

My first shot of the night before had passed through his open mouth, and out through the neck, blowing a gaping hole. Still he had come on. The second shot had gone high, entering behind the left shoulder, passing downwards through the lungs. And still he had come on. It was only my last shot, through the crown of his skull, that had shattered the brain that impelled his indomitable spirit.

This beast proved to be no exception to the invariable rule that it is the human race itself that causes a tiger to become a man-eater. He had an old bullet wound in the same leg—the right—as had been injured by me in our first encounter. Embedded in the elbow joint was a flattened lead ball, fired from some musket or gun a year or more earlier.

This ball, in that most important joint, had not only caused the tiger to suffer intense agony, but had greatly impeded his movements when it came to killing his legitimate food, wild game and cattle. It had weakened his use of his right leg, which plays an all-important part in gripping and pulling down a tiger's normal prey. Without a doubt, this was the sole factor that forced this tiger to turn to human beings for food, to keep himself from starving.

THE END
"Man-eater of Kempekarai" is an extract from "Man-eaters and Jungle Killers," which will be published in the spring by Allen & Unwin, at 16s.

Mad dog

Continued from page 13

car and Sergeant Baron. What do they want me for?"

"It's not you they want—it's the captain of the town rifle club. They've a job for him."

Henderson stared angrily at Baron. "Not another bull got loose? Why the hell can't they look after them better?"

He stood for a while, wondering where to direct his anger, then he shrugged. "I'll shave," he said abruptly. "I won't be long."

He turned and headed for the stairs again, but Baron stopped him. "I shouldn't bother about shaving, Tom," he said. "It's a rush job. Shove your jacket and tie on. And for God's sake hurry!"

In the police car, Henderson turned to his companion. "Why couldn't they get Appleby for this job? He's on duty."

"Appleby was asked, Tom, but he won't touch it."

"What's the matter? Appleby getting squeamish? He hasn't killed so many bulls, after all."

"It's not a bull this time, Tom," Baron said. "It's a mad dog—a mad dog with a gun."

"What?" Henderson's eyes flew to the other man's face. "A man?"

Baron nodded.

"What's happened?"

The other evaded the question. "The Old Man'll tell you about it when you get down. I expect they thought of you because you were on that Crosbie job."

HENDERSON said nothing, but sat silently, his face suddenly strained. He had shot a man once before. A young hooligan called Crosbie had murdered a policeman and hidden in his mother's house and challenged the whole force to come and get him. They had taken Henderson, with a few other crack shots, to a small town twenty-five miles away and placed him on the pavement behind a bush and told him to wait his chance. Several rifles had fired when the chance came, but there was only one bullet in the body, and Henderson had always known it was his.

"What do they want me to do?" he asked quietly.

"I don't know, Tom. Anyway, I was told to keep my mouth shut. The Old Man'll do all the talking."

"Tell me where it is, then."

"In a room off the High Street. He's holed up."

"In a room?"

"He knocked off a jeweller. Broad daylight. Just as he was opening the shop. Henry Watson was on traffic duty and chased him. He's got a bullet through the lungs."

"The man's nuts, Tom. Nuts as they come. He must have known he hadn't a chance of escape. After he got Henry, he turned into a set of offices and, by the time we got there, he was locked in with a typist."

"No!" The word burst angrily from Henderson's lips. He had been listening in silence, hunched in the seat, but now he sat up straight, his eyes cold. "I'm not having anything to do with it. Let them think up a different way to get him. I've had my share of that. I'm not playing."

Baron flashed him a glance. "He's got her with a gun in her back," he said. "He's bargaining for his life. He threatens to shoot her unless we let him go. The Old Man's afraid to rush him. They tried getting up to him once, and Inspector Derringer got one in the shoulder. If he could knock three out, he might try another. . . ."

Henderson's face was taut as the police car jerked to an abrupt halt. There was a big crowd at the end of the cordoned street, and Henderson thought he had never seen so many policemen in his life. Derringer was still there, he noticed, ashen-white; his arm in a sling, but still controlling things. The onlookers were all craning their necks but no one was pushing very hard to get to the front.

The windows of the offices down the sides of the street were empty, but Henderson occasionally caught glimpses

of frightened people standing well back inside, obviously afraid of being hit by a chance shot from the madman. Somewhere among them, he guessed, was his daughter, pushing her pretty seventeen-year-old nose as far round the corner as she dared, determined not to miss anything.

"In here, Tom!"

He followed Baron through the swing-door of a set of offices. The lift was waiting for him, and without question the liftman slammed the doors behind them and they shot upwards.

As the lift stopped, he saw Appleby, the other police marksman, standing in the corridor with a rifle in his hand.

"Hallo, Tom," Appleby said quietly, avoiding Henderson's eyes.

"Hallo, Arthur, got you in on this, too?"

"Kind of."

Henderson was swept into an office. The superintendent appeared in the doorway. Henderson had a high regard for the Old Man. It had been the Old Man who had gone forward armed only with a stick to lure Crosbie to the window of his mother's house.

"Hallo, Tom," he said, and it occurred oddly to Henderson that the superintendent wasn't a man in the habit of using first names, even with his inspectors, let alone mere sergeants.

"This is a lousy job we've got for you," the superintendent said. "We've got all the stuff. Appleby drew the rifles. Take your pick." He was talking as they walked along the corridor together, and somehow Henderson sensed that he was not speaking as an officer to one of his men. There was something deeper than that, something more personal that Henderson couldn't quite put his finger on.

"Sorry we had to drag you out," the superintendent went on. "But there was no one else."

"Sir"—Henderson stopped dead, his mind made up—"I can't do it."

The superintendent turned and faced him, but he said nothing.

"I won't do it, sir. You'll have to get Appleby."

"Appleby couldn't do this one, Tom."

"He's as good a shot as I am."

"Maybe he is, Tom. But he couldn't do this job."

Henderson's face was stubborn. "I've had my turn at this sort of thing," he said. "Let someone else have a try."

"Tom"—the superintendent's voice was gentle—"I know how you feel. I was there last time, too. But let me give you the picture first. You can make up your mind afterwards. Okay?"

"Okay." Henderson was sullen, with a feeling that somehow they were trying to trap him into the job.

"He's not moving, and I don't think he will. He's got"—the superintendent paused, then went on—"he's got the girl in a chair with her arm twisted behind her back. He's made no attempt to get out. I think he's begun to realize he's stuck."

Henderson waited. Somehow he suspected he hadn't heard the half of it yet.

"We've got an office that overlooks the place he's in," the superintendent continued. "His window's wide open. Thank God it's a warm day."

He dabbed at his neck with a handkerchief and suddenly Henderson

suspected it wasn't entirely the heat that was making him sweat.

"You've got a good view of both of them, Tom," the superintendent went on. "Appleby here"—he indicated the policeman standing behind them—"will do anything he can to help. Any advice you want. He's got all the stuff. Before we go in, just remember, don't let him see you. He hasn't suspected we're up to anything, and we don't want him to."

"I'm not going in," Henderson stood motionless and rocklike. "I'm not doing it."

"I think you will, Tom," the superintendent said. "He's in Gotthard and Johnson's."

"Gotthard and Johnson's!" Henderson's eyes flew to the superintendent's, and, as the ice took hold of his heart, he began to realize just what it was that had caused the difference in the superintendent's demeanour, just why it had seemed such an intimate, personal affair, just why they wanted him and not Appleby. "Gotthard and Johnson's! That's where my—"

"Yes, Tom. I know."

Henderson felt the floor was coming up to hit him. "You mean—"

"Yes, Tom. It's your daughter. That's why Appleby wouldn't do it. He still will, mind you, if you want him to, but he felt you ought to be here, and I agree. He's been standing by in case of any move, but so far there's been none. We were hoping you'd get here in time. It's got to be your decision, Tom."

Henderson stared at his superior officer, his eyes blank with agony.

"We didn't know it was your daughter when we first came up here, Tom," the superintendent went on. "We only discovered that as Appleby was squaring up. Then we thought you ought to be in on it."

"My wife know?"

"She shouldn't. Baron was told not to tell her."

"Thank God!" Henderson fought to get hold of himself, to stop the trembling in his hands. "Let's have a look, sir."

"You'll do it?"

"Let's have a look." Henderson repeated doggedly.

THE superintendent opened the door of the office and they moved in slowly. Inside were an inspector and a plain-clothes man. "Take it easy, Tom," the superintendent said. "Don't let him see you. Fortunately this side of the road's in shadow."

Henderson stared across the street from the room.

"There he is, Tom."

The inspector pointed with a gloved hand and Henderson, standing well back in the shaded room, forced himself to concentrate, to find the thing he still couldn't believe he would see.

For a moment his eyes swept the row of windows. He caught a flash of yellow in one of them and recognized it as his daughter's cotton frock.

His vision swam. Then he saw her plainly, sitting lopsidedly in the chair, but quite still, one arm twisted behind her back, and beyond her the head of a young man crouching by a door with a broken glass panel, his shoulder against it. His left hand held the girl's arm, and his right appeared to be against the door, holding a pistol in case anyone tried to enter.

"He's been like that for an hour now," the inspector said. "Hardly moved a muscle. Almost as though he knew what we had in mind."

"He's got a German pistol, they tell me," the superintendent said. "He's fired several times so far. He's tried a few through the door to keep everybody away. The office is at the end of the corridor. He can't get out and we can't get in. We're both stuck."

"He's got a pocketful of ammunition, according to his landlady," the inspector said, trying to be helpful. "We've had a man up at his lodgings, inquiring."

"Why the hell," the superintendent asked bitterly, "didn't she tell someone before that she'd got a lunatic with a gun in her place?"

Henderson was saying nothing. He stood motionless in the background of

MY BROTHER HUMPHREY

See page 27



Humphrey Lyttelton, the jazz musician, is the brother of Mrs. Mary Stewart Cox

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the office, as though by his very stillness he could help his daughter. His eyes were full of tears. He could see her, the fear on her face clear to him, though he could pick it up only as a blur.

Momentarily he thanked God they'd had the sense not to tell his wife. At least they'd spared her the ordeal and the agony he was suffering from now.

Then he suddenly remembered his daughter's eagerness as she'd run in with the news of this job, her first job, within a few days of leaving school. Her eyes had been bright and near to tears with happiness, just as his own were near to tears now with the thought of it. They'd bought her a new dress to start her off. . . .

Henderson tried again to see clearly across the road, and again his vision wouldn't let him. He found himself looking back instead, to the time when he'd last seen her in gym slip and school scarf, and earlier still. . . .

He got a grip on himself, and forced his eyes to focus. "Got a pair of binoculars, sir?" he asked quietly.

Silently the superintendent pushed a pair across to him and he squinted through them. The sun was streaming straight down from behind the building he was in, shining full on the windows opposite. He saw his daughter's face, in the ring of the lenses, and he had to put the binoculars down hurriedly.

"She's bearing up well, Tom," the superintendent said. "Unfortunately, that's what's complicating it."

Henderson forced himself to lift the binoculars again and stare through them, trying hard not to see the expression on his daughter's face.

"Can't we get him out in the street?" he pleaded.

"Not a hope. He's holed up. We tried tear gas, but we can't get it up to him. He only got a whiff and he threatened to shoot—to shoot your daughter if he gets another whiff."

HENDERSON stared blankly and the superintendent went on: "Tom, he's as crazy as a man can be. We daren't risk another move. This is the only way we can do it. We've offered to let him go, but he doesn't trust us. I think he's realized he's come to the end of the road."

Henderson was studying the window opposite again. If only he could call out. If only he could somehow get his daughter to manufacture a faint. But any attempt at that sort of thing would put the man on his guard.

"Appleby'll have a go, if you'll give your permission, Tom," the superintendent said gently.

"He needn't bother," Henderson said harshly. "I'll do it. Just give me a moment to get over it. It wants some taking in."

"Take your time. He's showing no sign of moving. Anything you want? We've got telescopic sights—"

"Don't like 'em," Henderson looked round and saw Appleby, suddenly sick-looking for the hulking policeman he normally was.

"Tom—" Appleby said. Then he stopped, and Henderson knew what he had felt when they told him the identity of the girl. He'd have felt the same.

"I got this one, Tom," Appleby made another effort to speak, and held out a rifle. "It's the one you like best. I know that."

"Yes, I'll try that one," Henderson said. His words sounded casual, but that was because somehow he couldn't bring himself to be anything else. He was fighting desperately to think of it only as a job, trying hard to forget the identity of the girl across the street. That was his only chance, his only hope. If he once remembered who she was, he'd never be able to do it. And he knew now, as well as Appleby and the superintendent and all the rest of them, that if the job was to be done there was only one man who could do it. And he was the man.

There was a table, end-on to the window and still in shadow to the building across the road. The window stood wide open.

Henderson stood alone, lonelier than he'd ever been in his life, fingering the



smooth butt of the .303. This was the rifle they'd sent him to Bisley with. He'd won a prize with it and done well enough against the experts to get his picture in the papers.

"Want a blanket or anything, Tom?" Appleby asked.

"Just a cushion."

They passed Henderson a cushion and he rested the rifle across it. "Take your time, Tom," Appleby said. "It's only forty yards. Not a hard shot."

The superintendent frowned and Appleby looked agitated again as he realized he'd said something incredibly stupid. But Henderson was aware of his efforts to help and he tried to smile at the other policeman. "Don't worry," he said. "I'm going to take my time."

Suddenly he was calm. He knew what he was doing. He glanced down the sights of the rifle. There was no quibbling about distances. That was one thing. It was a straightforward enough shot, except that the angle was very sharp.

"Glasses!" The superintendent passed the binoculars again and Henderson squinted through them. His daughter's face was ashen pale and she seemed to be leaning against the man who held her. He put down the binoculars and wiped his hands on his handkerchief before picking up the rifle again.

Through the sights, all he could see was his own daughter with about nine or ten inches of the man's head beyond her and a scrap of shoulder. He might have aimed at the shoulder but, while

FLATTERY—2

Flattery is like bad money.
it impoverishes those who
receive it.

Madame Woillez

that would have reduced the danger to his daughter, a wound might only enrage the madman who was holding her.

"Okay," he said at last. "I'm ready." He looked round at the other men. "Think I could go this alone, sir?"

The superintendent looked at him quickly. "If you prefer it that way, Tom." He nodded at the others and they all went out. The door clicked behind them and Henderson laid his forehead against the cool barrel of the rifle.

It was all his now. He wondered if he could possibly graze the madman's head and knock him unconscious. Then he realized he might miss by a hair's-breadth and the crash of a bullet into the room would only start the shooting again. He had to shoot to kill. But the lower he aimed, the nearer he was directing the bullet to his own daughter's brain.

He squinted down the sights, cradling the butt of the rifle against his shoulder and cheek. His finger was round the trigger. He could see his daughter's face again beyond the

muzzle of the rifle, and he found his vision swimming. Those sharp eyes of his, which were the reason for his skill, just weren't working properly, and waves of nausea kept sweeping over him.

He pulled himself together and tried again, but once more he found he couldn't keep his eyes clear.

"My God, I can't do it," he said aloud, in agony.

For a moment he thought of calling Appleby in, then he decided against it. The shot was his and his alone. He couldn't shift the responsibility, with his own daughter involved. He had to do it himself and now—quickly—before his eyes clouded again.

He put the rifle against his cheek again, fighting down the nausea, deliberately avoiding looking down the line of the barrel. Then, abruptly, his head came up and he took a quick sight, and pressed the trigger.

The crash of the shot echoed round the building and, momentarily, he saw the people in the offices opposite lift their heads, startled. Then he saw the madman jerk upright and the girl in his arms crumple up and slide to the floor. The smell of cordite acrid in his nostrils, Henderson's head dropped across the rifle as the strength went out of him.

He heard the crash of the door bursting open behind him and the tramp of several pairs of heavy feet. Then he heard the superintendent's voice at the window, shouting down into the street: "Clark! Tell Inspector Derringer to send someone in now. Tell him to hurry, for God's sake."

There were shouts from outside and a scream or two, but Henderson lay motionless on the table, sprawled over the rifle, unconscious of the movement around him, unconscious of anything beyond the sight of his daughter sliding to the ground while the man who held her still stood.

There was silence in the room for a while, no one speaking, no one going near him, while the cries outside increased. Then he heard a distant shout, and he heard the superintendent mutter: "Thank God!"

He heard someone's feet crossing to the table where he lay face down. "Tom!" The hand on his shoulder was light. "It's all right."

Henderson lifted his head at last, and there were tears in his eyes. He said weakly: "But I saw her fall out of his arms to the floor."

"She'd fainted. When you hit him she just slipped. She's all right. She's coming round."

Henderson still lay on the table, fighting against the spasms of trembling that racked his body. The tears were flooding into his eyes again and he put his forehead against the barrel of the rifle, certain that nothing could ever drive out of his mind the agony he'd felt for those few seconds after the shot.

Then he got control of himself and, sitting up quickly, blew his nose hard. He put his cap on and pushed the rifle across to Appleby.

"I think I'll go and see her now, sir," he said.

THE END

Stranger in the street

Continued from page 9

a thief, I aim to bring him to his milk. I'm the foreman, and you—"

"I bargained to ride out for poker, Coates. Nothing else. I don't say you ought to turn the man loose. But hear me, damn you. There's a rifle on that dun horse. If you mean to have a hanging, you better kill me before I get to it."

Talk, talk. Rupp looked at the horses; he must not wait too long. But not yet, just; not until his sight quit dimming in and out. The cold echoes still clattered in his skull; he had thought it was Durham who kicked him. Now he wasn't sure. . . .

He went fading away, came back, and again it was sound he awoke to—Durham's voice, saying, "All right, but it'd be damned savage."

"That ain't savage," Coates snapped. "Not like Kiowas, or such. Trouble is, you ain't old enough. I mean, you wasn't in the war. Why, hell, it was a regular custom in the army. Man stole something, you caught him and laid a T on him. When that big buffler-stink comes alive, we'll—"

Rupp lunged. Only he didn't come up running. He sprawled on his face, hard, suddenly sick. His wrists had been bound behind him, the thong threaded through his belt, and his ankles were hobbled, and he hadn't felt the bonds at all.

Hands wrenched him over until his bound fists gouged into his back. Coates stunk of stale whisky as he bent

Epigram

by EDITHA M. KELLY

We master Everest, pierce depths profound
With radar eye, burst barrier of sound,
But humbly mark the limits of man's power—
The frozen sparrow and the withered flower.

close, stripping Rupp's shirt open to the belt.

"Johnsy Boy!" Coates shouted. "You, now, you can do the honours. Ain't that what they say, do the honours?"

Rupp twisted his head, staring as the pretty youth came forward. In his right hand was the running iron, the circle of it a flaky red and quivering a little on the willow stem.

Rupp's knees jerked up. "God's sakes, that rustler lit out before I got here. I swear it. You, Brooks Durham—"

Coates stamped a boot on Rupp's throat, flattening him to the sand, and Rupp watched the iron drive to his chest.

He heard Durham's voice complain, from far off: "You're scaring off the horses," and he looked, and he saw the big straw-haired man chasing off after them. Rupp thought of the dun, and the saddlebags, out there and undefended, and he thrashed under the boot, bursting to shout.

Then he heard a crackle, smelled the singe. There was a moment before the fire and agony took, and in it waited Jessie, motionless in a dress red as wine, the skirt flared wide, the waist set close with not a wrinkle, her shoulders thin and bare above the red, all as it had been at their wedding party.

The iron was cutting a rut across his chest, dragging like a braked wheel. He wondered if he had screamed, or if he would. A long time he fought it. Then he felt his body convulsing.

"My God, that's enough!"

It was Durham's voice. Durham back with a rifle.

"Stop it, damn you! Or I'll kill you both. . . ."

Sometime in the night, Rupp became



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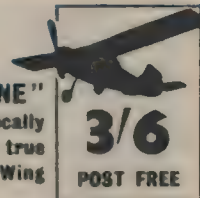
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vaguely aware that he was lying beside the embers of the fire. He was alone, and it was dark. Far off and high, a panther wailed like a woman mourning. Rupp heard the swish of water in Dirty Creek and thought quickly of Jessie before, again, delirium returned.

Jessie Larkin, like Julius Rupp, was an orphan. But whereas Julius came to adolescence under the careless guardianship of old Dub Stokes, Jessie had the proper care of her Aunt Gussie and lived in a house that was Coldiron's nearest approach to a mansion.

Julius remembered one day when he was sitting astride Turner Wallace—for Turner had made fun of his bare clodbuster feet—when he looked up and saw her. She stood in Crowder Street, at the entrance to the alley, staring at them.

"You . . . you have hurt that boy," she said.

Julius got up, letting his enemy flounder up and run. "Likely I did," he said.

"Your mama, she'd not like it, if you act a bully," Jessie said.

"She couldn't," he said. "She's dead."

"Oh," the girl said. "I . . . I hate to hear tell of it." She put down the basket she was carrying. "Are you fifteen?"

"Sixteen," Julius lied, because she had guessed him right.

"Who watches out for you?" Jessie said.

"Me."

"Oh!" She reddened, then smiled. "I'm that way, too. My mama and papa. . . . I'm a tragedy, my Aunt Gussie says."

"You got a big house?"

"Yes. Except it don't get warm in the winter. Where do you live?"

"Dugout," he said. "North aways."

"Oh!"

Julius pointed to her basket.

"What's that you're carryin'?"

"Food to eat. My Aunt Gussie has ladies-in, and she says I can have an eat-out if I watch about going too far." Her hands took a hitch-up on the basket. "I'll go the creek, I guess."

"If you head out to the trail, north, and cut off west, they's willows and grass and sand to sit on," Julius offered.

She smiled at him. "I don't guess I know how to get there," she said.

"I'll show you," Julius said. "Let me carry the basket."

FOR the rest of the summer, Jessie kept coming to the creek, and during the second summer she came even more often because Miss Gussie had opened up a ladies' emporium on Crowder Street, leaving Jessie with looser strings.

Julius fell to new habits, getting regular at shaving off the soft beard his chin grew. He wore his good boots steadily, no longer saving them, and every day he tallowed the leather in case he might see her.

The year he was nineteen, and Jessie two years shy of that, there was a drought. Julius went to hauling water from the Little Dirty. He had two wooden barrels on a borrowed wagon.

On an afternoon when his sweat dripped into the stream each time he bent over it, Jessie came over the hill. She brought no basket. He sat on the bank beside her.

"I nearly died, walking out here," she said.

"Why do you come?"

"It's . . . well, it's some place to go."

Aunt Gussie took it badly when Jessie told her she meant to be married. Miss Gussie knew hardly anything of the Rupp boy, only that he was a foot taller than any man she could call to mind, quite penniless, and without kin.

"Jessie, dear, my God!" Miss Gussie said. "Even that name—Rupp. It sounds like an upset stomach."

"Don't say that, please. I love him."

"Child, how could you? Oh, that overgrown ragamuffin!"

"Stop it," Jessie lost the smile she



had for her aunt. "I will marry him, I will."

They were married in a wild-flowered and shined-shoe ceremony at the new Coldiron Union Church. An hour afterwards Julius went along in Miss Gussie's surrey to Dub Stokes's homestead and packed what he had saved of his own. Then he drove back and along Crowder Street to the mansion of the Larkins.

He and Jessie took three rooms upstairs—rent-free," Miss Gussie made clear, though it put him on edge, for Jessie didn't object and he could not. But he swore that very soon they'd live in their own house, wear their own finery, and take Sunday drives in their own tally-ho, all paid for by a business of his own.

Rupp had no clear idea what his business would be, or how he'd come by the money to start it. But he handled animals better than most and had a sure hand with tools. He offered these skills to Coldiron.

He talked first to old Sam Heidel, at the mercantile. "Guess I could use a boy," Sam said. "Part-time, you understand. Be worth about eight dollars a month to me, I'd say, to have the store cleaned out of a morning."

Some offered him boy's wages; some sent him smarting away. "Ain't you the kid that married Miss Gussie's little niece? Miss Gussie's not asking you to work, is she? Boy, they say she's got plenty. Now, was it me in your boots. . . ."

Julius stuck it as long as he could. Finally, he told Jessie: "We're moving out of here."

"Moving? My, whatever for?"

"We're going somewhere that we can make it or bust in a furrow of our own choosing."

"Isn't it . . . isn't it nice enough here?"

"My mind's set."

"It is? Shouldn't we have talked it over?"

"That's what we're doing. Kansas, I guess that's where we'll go. Buffalo hunting. You can get a room at Dodge and I'll see you whenever I come in with a load."

"You . . . you aren't letting me discuss it with you," Jessie said.

"I decided," he said. In Dodge, he told her, a man could get two dollars for a buffalo hide, a nickel a pound for buffalo meat, and upwards of ten

dollars a ton for bone. Thousands of buffalo grazed on the broad grassy plains to the north, and Kansans, wanting this graze cleared for cattle, welcomed hunters.

He tried to make himself clear. It was the flat-broke year of 1873 when people, outside of the three in the mansion, licked their fingers carefully so as not to waste even one smear of grease. He tried to tell Jessie that all he wanted from living was to win something and hand it to her. He wanted her to step down from the Larkin house to where he was, so that they could climb back up together.

Telling Jessie about it was the longest speech Rupp ever made. When he finished, she said: "Oh, Julius, it's Aunt Gussie, don't you see? She's not well; you know it. And she's been heartbroken so many times, and—I suppose we have to talk about it—she is hurt now, about us. We can wait, Julius. We have to."

Rupp heard her, but could not

FLATTERY—3

Just praise is only a debt, but
flattery is a present.

Samuel Johnson

answer. He lay awake for the whole of that night, taut with fury, and next day he bought a pair of wind-broken ponies and a blind mare. He was sure Jessie would not let him leave alone.

In the morning he took his horses around to the front gate. He went inside and upstairs to their bedroom. Jessie still wore her nightdress.

"You're not dressed," he said.

"You're going? Really going?"

"I ain't begging nobody to buy my ginger cakes," he said. "Now let's bundle up your clothes."

She gripped a small hand on a bedpost, looking at him with dread and pain in her eyes. "Julius . . . I'm not coming. I cannot. . . ."

Often in the years after, Rupp pictured the fragments of that morning: Jessie sitting bent on the bed, unmoving; Aunt Gussie weeping in her room; and himself, wordlessly in and out of the house, loading the horses. Even when he walked to the gate for the last time, he knew he expected

Jessie to come running. But Jessie didn't come. . . .

"This here Jessie woman you keep moanin' about," a voice said, "she must of been one heap of gal."

Julius Rupp turned, retreating from the sun's morning bead on his face. Working over on to his back, he discovered, as twice he had in the night, that he wasn't dead, but merely a man who'd been sent for and couldn't go.

He squinted to locate the speaker. Instead he saw the wound on his chest. The black-red ruin spanned jaggedly from armpit to armpit, and downward along his middle to his waist, ragged and raw, oozing a fluid the colour of tequila, the whole searing at each wisp of air. Along the brand hung shreds of dead yellow flesh, so that the T seemed to be rotting while it burned him alive.

"Must of laid that iron to you about half-dozen times to leave a mess like that," the man said softly. He was squatting beside a nubbin of a fire, busy with the contents of a warped black frying pan. He was small, with iron-grey hair dropping stiff and dirty to his shoulders. He wore a hickory shirt and overalls.

"You been goin' on all night about this Jessie gal," the small man said. "I left that uncovered, didn't hardly know what else, not with a hellbender like that one. Figured it might go to healing if they was some air gettin' to it. You know, air is—"

"The damned air! That's what's killing me."

"Sure, if you want a patch. . . ."

Rupp flattened his palms on the sand and pushed himself up to sitting. At the motion his skin seemed to stretch, crack, then pop apart, as though made of rotten denim.

The little man walked towards him, stopped, and stood doubtfully on one leg. "You poor cooked boss," he said.

Then Rupp thought of the money. He twisted towards his saddle, and if the pain whimpered in his throat, he damned it. The old bags remained in place, lashed behind the cantle. He slapped the one nearest. It did not collapse. He unlatched the buckles and yanked up the flap. The bag was packed with buffalo grass.

He grabbed for the other. More dirt and roots and crumbling grass. . . . He swore, until he choked on it. Then the small man laid hands on his shoulders and was forcing him back down.

"You ought to stay easy, son. Stay easy."

Rupp spied more gear scattered about on the ground. A gapped-open pack with one binder strap stiffened up straight by the wind, a blanket roll in poncho, a food sack. He pitched from the little man's grip, groaning at the hot burst and tug of his wound, and on hands and knees he went after it, plundering, slinging, hunting.

"Hey, ox, that there's mine! Hold on, you got into my stuff."

Rupp couldn't stop.

The little man walked wide around him, slowly, and he whistled. "Hoss, if you don't know it, you ain't clearly in your senses."

Rupp's fingers had been clawing, as though he might yet strangle up the money from the sand, the way he'd squeezed and worked and bled it out of a wild country in wild years. His money and Jessie's, his measure of how far a man could scramble uphill, was gone. Seventeen thousand dollars, grubbed out in eleven seasons of buffalo killing and fly-bitten butchering and close dealing and lonesome, freezing freight hauls, was taken from him.

He sat on the ground, still.

"Whatever you lost," the small man said, "you ain't doing that burn any good."

Rupp watched him return to the fire. There was beef frying on a skillet.

"Who're you?" Rupp said.

"Nobody much; name's Hanley. Happened I found you."

The little man lifted out the meat and put it on a tin plate. "Who done that to you?"

"Three of them."

"Know who they was?"

A wind gust flapped Rupp's open shirt across the brand, and it stuck.

He trebled and slowly peeled the shirt

loose. "I know 'em," he said. "By God, I do."

Hanley tore chunks of hot bread off the stick, flipped half the meat on to a second plate and offered it. "Eat?"

"No," Rupp said.

"Suit yourself," Hanley shrugged.

Rupp got up and turned towards the creek, his legs shimmying. At the water's edge he knelt where a bit of the Little Dirty backed up into a still shallow pool. As he cupped his hand towards it, he saw himself mirrored.

He saw the puffed cherry bruise on his forehead, the beard clogged in grime and blood. Two shattered ears, now, and between them, the heartless gun-barrel eyes. This shot-away husk, was this what he'd thought to bring back to Jessie and the sweetness of her arms, as if handing her a gilded prize?

He rammed his fists into the image. Roughly he washed, stinging his cuts with the water, letting it drain off from his beard in a dozen pinkish streams.

"You!" he yelled. "You got a razor?"

"Now hold on, feller. You ain't so bad off."

"Bring the razor."

Hanley said: "If you'd just as leave, I'm carrying a gun you could borrow. Man could kill himself cleaner that way."

"I can't do much shaving with a gun."

Hanley set aside his plate. "Got a good razor," he said. "Stole it off a barber. Say, you ain't no great hand for jokes, are you . . .?"

WALKING home from "Jessie Rupp's Ladies' Emporium," Jessie Rupp kept to the west side of Crowder Street, a departure from her habit, and quite a rare one in that her decision to do so had not been considerably made.

This way she must pass Tate's saloon, and farther on, the more girly and rowdier Two Bulls, thus twice risking the guttery language and ribaldry and debauched smells which charged out of the yawning doors of these dens.

On most occasions when she worked late she crossed Crowder directly in front of her shop, then followed the east side all the way to the house. On the east, she need defy only one drinkery, and she could also savour the fine warm breath of new bread being baked in Mrs. Lavender's shop.

Suddenly she knew why she was walking along the west side tonight. It was the same reason she had loitered against going home on time, the reason she had stayed late to clean the shop when Thursday wasn't regular cleaning day and the shop had scant need of it. It was Brooks Durham, of course.

The Stockman's Security Bank stood on Crowder's east side, and Brooks Durham, as bank manager, had his sleeping room immediately above it. This one evening, Jessie realized, she'd not wanted to pass beneath his window.

Now she was in front of Tate's, and she quickened her step to shorten the time of her plunge through the smoky span of saloon light.

Ahead Jessie could see the lights of the Two Bulls. The Bulls' rattly piano was under punishment, as if to duel with the one down the street. Once more Jessie sped her steps. Two blocks more, then home, and the luxury of breaking out of her stays and tasting a nip of mild brandy—a secret indulgence reserved for only her severest days—and perhaps resting a whole hour before beginning to dress for Brooks.

He'd wear his grey suit, the one he held aside for church and for her, and he'd look immense in it, and immensely stable, the way her house used to look stable. She'd have to decide very soon how to answer him.

She came almost abreast of the Two Bulls, and she felt an unease. She changed her hat to her left hand, and with the right she squeezed hard on the handle of her parasol. She crossed through the patch of light, yet strangely she breathed no easier. On an impulse she turned and looked back.

He was there; she must have known it; a shaggy bull of a figure, charging



her from the street, limping so that one foot dragged up dust. She stared, not believing. Then she knew she ought to be running.

The man slowed, then came on faster, his huge body bobbing to the limp. It struck her he thought she had turned to wait.

"Stop!" she called, and she swept the parasol up over her head.

The man came on. Foolishly she yearned to dress down that do-nothing town council that paid no mind to Brooks about getting street lamps, or hiring some law. Now she was madly afraid and it seemed she had frozen, for she could not run.

"Jessie!" the man rasped, and his huge, terrible hands seized at her.

She hammered down the parasol, jumping her whole might into it. She felt the shock along her arm as the cane whacked against flesh, and she gasped "Oh!" and struck him again.

The man staggered back, his hands falling off her. He was a giant.

"Jessie, wait," he whispered. She got both hands on the parasol

coming, hard as I could run." It was Mrs. Lavender. Jessie dug deep into her massive arms, her head falling into a pillowy, unfettered bosom.

"The brute!" Mrs. Lavender said, patting Jessie's shoulder. "I seen it. Poor child! That drunken brute!"

Jessie could hardly speak. She gasped: "Quick, please get me home. Before . . . before they all come out here and look at me."

"There now, there," crooned the older woman. "I'll take you home, straight away. Did he hurt you, child?"

Jessie shook her head. "But he . . . he knew my name."

Mrs. Lavender's bulging, sleeveless arm steadied her, and Jessie let the safe, puffing bake-woman guide her and unlatch the white picket gate for her, and steer her along the walk.

A tepid staleness filled the big house. When Jessie left it in the mornings, she hated having slept there, and in the evenings she hated returning. Yet she loved the house; she'd discovered it anew when she asked Brooks Durham why the bank permitted him to arrange new mortgages to cancel out the old ones.

He had replied by leading her on a tour of her home, as if she did not know by heart each knob and cranny and dust trap.

"The directors agree with me that if we had to foreclose, this would make a first-rate bank building," he told her. "It'd be the dandiest bank in West Texas. Look, see what a lobby the parlour would make? Teller cages fixed in, about here, closing off the arch into the dining-room. The kitchen, we could brick it up for the vault, and the upstairs would chop up into rent offices."

"Brooks!"

"Don't worry, Jessie, I'd never let the bank take it from you. . . ."

"Now, child, I'll fix some tea," Mrs. Lavender said.

"I don't want any tea, I . . . well, after what happened down there, I need. . . ."

The big woman laughed. "All right, child. Where do you keep the stuff?"

Jessie gestured to the mahogany wardrobe cabinet, still not looking. "On the top shelf. Oh, Mrs. Lavender, that . . . that dirty rag of a man, he knew my name. And when he touched me, he smelled; actually, he smelled terrible."

Mrs. Lavender sighed. "Girl, you ain't the only woman as has got molested in this wolf hole."

Jessie swallowed her drink, and held the glass between her hands, rolling it. "Mrs. Lavender," she said, "Yesterday Brooks Durham . . . asked me to marry him."

"Well!" The big woman beamed

and dumped down the balance of her brandy. "What'd you tell him?"

"I said I was tired, and I'd talk to him tonight."

"Holy dern! You mean you ain't decided on him yet?"

"I . . . I don't know."

"I'd judge you love the man."

"Oh, yes. Yes. Only . . . I'm afraid of him sometimes, the way he makes me feel."

"That's it!" the big woman roared. "That's straight from the book. You're stuck."

"But . . . I've been married already."

"Oh, him, that what's-his-name. Julius, weren't it? How long has he been dead?"

"Who knows that he is?" Jessie said.

Mrs. Lavender scowled at her. "Why, child, some drunkard shot him, up at Dodge, didn't they say?"

"I know, but—"

"But you ain't sure you believe it."

Mrs. Lavender said: "Don't matter, anyway—it's the law, ain't it? Your man stays gone and unheard of for seven years, then you're a widow woman. Free as water, you are. That one, he's been off ten years."

"Eleven."

"All right, eleven," Mrs. Lavender looked down at the bottle on the floor, and grinned. "More of that tonic, girl?"

Jessie smiled. "You think we ought?"

"It strikes me, yes. Taking into account, of course, what us two just went through," Mrs. Lavender poured more brandy into Jessie's glass. "Marry Brooks Durham, I say."

"If I could be sure about Julius. And there's that money owing between us ever since Aunt Gussie died—to keep this house, and put a fair stock in the store."

"That was the bank's money you borrowed."

"Yes, but Brooks lent it. If I married him now, people might say . . . they'd say. . . ."

"The good ones, they'd say hooray for you. The rest would say you sold yourself off and what would you care?"

"I'd care, I think."

THE big woman swallowed the last of her drink, and she said, again: "You marry that man." She pulled herself up and they said good night. Then Jessie started up; there was the barest moment to wash and dress before Brooks arrived.

He'll be fresh shaved and gentle, she thought, and I love him—except damn that little mannerism of his, that endless bouncing and tossing and toying with the gold piece on his vest. It kept her guessing, what she didn't want to guess. Always guessing: heads, is it—or tails . . . ?

Rupp walked wooden-leggedly into the Two Bulls and stood towering over the near end of a bar breast-high to most men. "Whisky," Rupp said. "A bottle."

The barman set it out, his eyes holding to Rupp's face. Rupp hiked the bottle high and poured the rolling heat down his throat as though his stomach were full of rats to be drowned; and for all he knew, by damn, it was.

"Two dollars," the barman said.

The heat Rupp felt was not the night, or the liquor, or fever, nor was it only the way his wife had received him home. It was all of them, heaped into a thoughtless craving he'd not felt before, not even last night at the Little Dirty. He drank, and groped to put a name to it.

"That's two dollars," the barman said.

Rupp took the bottle down from his mouth, gripping it by the neck while he stirred through the motions of searching his pockets. He said: "I'll bring the money by, in a day or so."

The barman glanced at the Colt in Rupp's waist. Then he spread his rag and went swabbing off along the bar. Rupp drank again, and carried his bottle out into the street.

He looked at the night and spat at it, and it struck him as he walked what the hot feeling had been. He needed, just, to kill somebody tonight. . . .

Johnsy Hood dressed carefully in

FLATTERY—4

Love of flattery, in most men, proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themselves; in women, from the contrary.

Jonathan Swift

then, and she batted it at his head. She felt the shaft break across the forearm the man flung up. Then he had hold of her elbows, trapping them in a crush at her sides. His strength was fantastic, and she was in terror, helpless.

"Oh," she sobbed, "oh, oh, oh!"

"Dammit, Jessie, shut up," his voice grated.

"Let me go. Let me go, you . . . oh, you smelly tramp, let me go."

At once it was over. The hands drew away and she needed no aid. Her outcry had won. She stared up at the blackness of his face, and he groaned, weakly, as if even the agony of him was tired, and he swung away from her towards the light of the Two Bulls.

"You . . . you lecher!" she screamed after him, and in an instant of yellow blaze she glimpsed his face, battered and swollen and hideous. Lord, how much only a fluffy umbrella had done!

She began running, feeling a stinging wrath streaming down her cheeks. Then she cried out as she collided violently with someone soft.

"I seen it, dear, I seen it. I was

front of a big looking-glass and sprinkled a few amber drops of bergamot into his palm. These he patted into the oiled black waves of his hair and, as he did so, he sniffed his appreciation of the sweet, spicy fog which instantly crowned him.

Men in these parts knew none of the niceties of good grooming, nor were they apt to learn, this season or the next. And this comforted Johnsy, for he himself had a mastery of such things. He understood, for instance, the considerable effect a man's scent might have on a woman, which was but one of the little detail things that assured him he'd make out, as indeed he had made out during the two years since he'd left St. Louis.

Hadn't he, in Coldiron, an eminence in cards and women—especially women? For one, Bonnie Shelley.

He wetted his finger from his tongue, and, leaning close to the mirror, began rubbing down the even black lines of his eyebrows. Certainly, Bonnie Shelley. Her fattishness aside, hadn't she been attracted to him until she shivered at bearing it, and flamed in the face, even wept, while telling him so? And how she loved his bergamot, from the first moment she saw him.

The day he'd first seen her, he had gone to the Stockman's Security to deposit a night's poker winnings. He'd had to line up and wait at the teller's booth, standing behind Brack Shelley, and he'd noticed old Brack stuffing sheaves of new money into a money belt.

Bonnie Shelley sat in one of the lattice-backed lobby chairs, waiting for her husband, looking tired and dog-plain in a home-made dress that came near to concealing the full swells of her body. Her eyes met Johnsy's briefly, approving him in the instant she smiled.

Johnsy had nodded and thought nothing more of her, until a few days later, when he heard about Brack Shelley and his crew starting a trail herd off to Kansas.

Winking at himself in the glass, Johnsy left the washstand. His full-tailed grey coat lay ready on the bed.

He drew it on, establishing the drape to match the sloppy perfection of his necktie. He fed a silk and lace handkerchief into the breast pocket, took the shiny derringer from the washstand top and slipped it into a pocket of the vest. After a final, approving smile at the glass, he stopped and puffed out the lamp.

His buggy and team were waiting in the alley beside the hotel, old Dub Stokes's nigger boy suspended sleepily from the bridles. The boy handed up the reins as Johnsy settled himself in the seat.

"Careful, Mister Hood. Them hosses is stompin' upset tonight."

"I can drive."

"Yes, suh, you can do that, Mister Hood. What I aimed on saying was, they was a giant-man—"

"Well, why don't you get back out of the way?"

"Suh," the boy said, and he did not move, "this man, he come into the barn and he ast me—"

Johnsy snapped the reins. "Dammit, nigger, you want me to run you down?"

The bays leaped into the street, trying to take charge of the bits as they danced away north. Johnsy steadied the animals to the trail, putting them at a skittish jog until Coldiron was well behind. Then he gave in to their bow-necked energy and let them look a deal more sprightly.

Propping his feet on the dashbar, he reared back. Excitement and the spicy feel of prosperity bolted around inside him, like love's own lightning. Outside there was the scantiest of winds, at least, for this filthy country, and it seemed hardly enough to draught away the fresh lotion he wore for Bonnie Shelley this final time.

Johnsy didn't doubt his power over Bonnie. Weeks of preparation, pleading and persuasion had led up to this night. She would be waiting for him at the homestead with all Brack's money fresh-drawn from the bank.

Johnsy was to take the money, and he had promised to meet Bonnie in St. Louis a week from today. Instead he

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER



*Father Wall trod on a notch of wood
—and entered a secret hiding-place*

EIGHTY years ago a visitor to Harvington Hall, Worcestershire, described it as a ruin inhabited by the swallows which glided in and out of the unglazed windows. Today this romantic moated house—belonging to the Roman Catholic diocese of Birmingham—is protected by the National Trust.

It is one of the most complete Roman Catholic strongholds left in England. In the seventeenth century it was the headquarters of the Franciscan friar Father John Wall, who ministered to the recusant Catholics in the Midlands. He was the last Catholic martyr to meet death in England, being hanged in 1679 following Titus Oates's pretended discovery of a Popish plot. Father Wall was beatified in 1929.

His hostess was Lady Yate, who owned Harvington from 1631 to 1696, when she died there at the age of eighty-six.

When very old she wished to travel for the good of her health, but because of her religion was prevented. At length she was given special permission, and her passport "to imbarque with her trunks of Apparel and other necessities not prohibited at any port of this kingdom" is still preserved. After Lady Yate's death, the house was never lived in by her descendants and has barely been altered.

Harvington has a maze of passages and staircases leading

off at all angles. It contains the most ingenious collection of secret hiding-places known.

One is approached from a small room known as Dr. Dodd's Library. On a raised platform a book cupboard formerly stood. Part of the cupboard was movable and revealed the brick and timber wall. One of the vertical wall timbers, on being pressed, swings outwards and allows a moderately thin person to squeeze his way into a small chamber.

Another hiding-place is entered from a corridor with a flight of steps. Two of the steps lift up and disclose a hole large enough to conceal a crouching man. Here Father Wall's mattress made of reeds gathered from the moat was discovered.

A third hiding-place is entered by treading on what looks like a notch of wood on a floor-board.

There is also a tradition that Harvington Hall has certain false floors which when walked on by unauthorised persons would give way and hurtle them to their death below.

How to get there: Harvington Hall is four miles from Kidderminster. **Open:** Weekdays (except Mondays, but on Bank Holiday Mondays), 11.30 till 1, 2 till 7, and Sundays, 2 till 7, or dusk if earlier.

planned to head for San Francisco alone, his pockets lined with her husband's lifetime savings.

Johnsy gave way to thick-carpeted, gas-lit imaginings of a ruffled and perfumed San Francisco. There, people said, on an inlay of the ocean, stood a sure enough city. There they had women who bathed every week and carried picture-painted fans, gay women who, in the evening, went gliding about with their men to the sound of whole big orchestras. In San Francisco, he never doubted, a man might live quite as fine as in the East.

He began whistling, listening to himself with a charity, so that what he heard was a genuine ballroom tune, stroked from a dozen violins. As he considered it, he began to realize he was hearing too many hoofbeats, as

if the bays laid down extra feet. He twisted to look behind. A horseman was cantering close to him.

Johnsy called, "Hey!" and yanked the shocked bays to a pawing, squatting halt. The rider crowded up to the rig at Johnsy's right, his figure high and broad on a mount that looked aged and gaunt, even under the moon. Johnsy's mouth closed, and opened again. He was not mistaken; the glint he caught was off a gun.

"We'll change directions, Johnsy Boy," the figure said.

To be continued next week

"Stranger In The Street," by Al Dewlen, is to be published by Longmans Green as a book called "The Night Of The Tiger." It will appear in the summer at 15s.

A deal in diamonds

Continued from page 17

now. "What made you give up the fascinating cognac industry?"

"One can weary of fascination. I prefer diamonds."

At this Roulade chuckled. "No doubt the profits are quicker," he conceded. "And perhaps the losses are not so great as in cognac."

Carell did not want to discuss cognac. He had to get away from a subject about which he knew so little; so he purposely asked a question about the origin of the Diamond Dealers' Club, and for an hour, while they sipped cognac, they talked of the club and of diamonds.

It was a very profitable hour. When Carell at last broached the matter of acquiring a gem or two from Aristide Roulade, the old man said: "Eh bien, come and see me at my office in the morning. I will show you what I have in the safe. If you still wish to buy, we can talk. At eleven tomorrow?"

"Perfect," Carell said. He was jubilant. And, having achieved what he had come to accomplish that evening, he rose to leave.

The old man reached for the bottle. "A last drink?"

"No, thank you. A man knows when he has had enough."

Roulade was looking at the bottle. And suddenly he said: "There is something I have always wanted to ask about cognac bottles." He pointed to its bottom. "Why does the glass rise in a kind of cone, or whatever it is? Why isn't the bottom flat?"

Carell was annoyed and suddenly apprehensive. Was Roulade asking these things for a purpose?

He said in a jocular tone: "Come, come, *mon ami*, now you ask things which require scientific explanation. It would take hours to go into them. Let us put them aside for another time." He held out his hand. "Good night, and I thank you for a most pleasant evening. Until tomorrow at eleven."

"Until tomorrow," Monsieur Roulade said.

Since everything had gone so well, it was strange that Georges Carell found it impossible to sleep. Most of the night he paced the floor of his bedroom, worrying, nervous. Could the old man have been baiting him with those questions? And had he betrayed himself with his ignorance?

He could not know. As he walked the floor in darkness, Carell was not even sure he had shown ignorance. Possibly the things he had said about cognac were all close to the truth.

I must find out, he told himself, a touch of desperation in the thought. . . .

HE had long ago learned that Edouard Denis et Fils were the largest distributors of cognac in Antwerp. Immediately after breakfast he picked up the telephone. His nerves were taut and his face was drawn. He reached Monsieur Edouard Denis himself.

"My name is Van Bernhaus," he said. "I am writing an article on cognac. I wonder if you would answer a few questions."

"One can try, Monsieur."

"First, those raised bottoms in the bottles—what is their purpose?"

"Very simple," Monsieur Denis said. "Originally the manufacturers used this punt, as it is called, in order to give added strength to the glass of the bottle. Now it has become traditional."

Carell was jolted. His eyes widened. If Aristide Roulade had been setting a trap, what had he thought about the glib dismissal of this question on the grounds that it required a long technical answer?

His grip on the telephone became fierce. How could he have allowed the old man to make a fool of him—and now, of all times, when he stood on the very brink of his greatest success?

"You have other questions?" Monsieur Denis asked.

"Yes!" Carell's voice was strained. "Would anybody in Cognac be likely to—to buy barrels from a manufacturer in, say, Bruges?"

"Impossible! Barrels used by the

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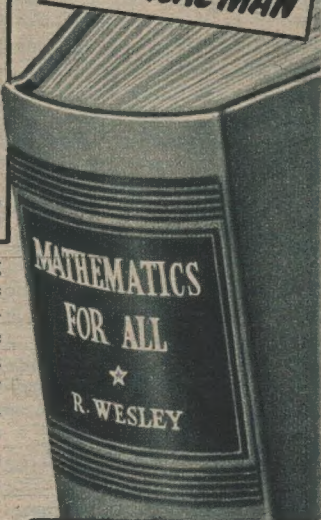
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cognac industry must be made of oak taken out of the nearby forest of Limousin. No other wood in the world gives cognac the right flavour."

Carell squeezed his eyes shut. How could he have been such an idiot? How could he have stepped into so many traps?

"Just—just one more question," he hoarsely. "How is it that the—the taste of cognac remains the same year after year?"

"For that one must thank the genius of the tasters," Monsieur Denis said. "Naturally, the *eau de vie* distilled from wines varies in taste from one vintage to another, so the distillers must always store the *eau de vie* of many different years, sometimes as many as seventy-five.

"Every year the tasters mix, blend, and balance until they produce the same taste. Sometimes they have to blend the *eau de vie* of twenty different years. There are many odd facts I could give you, monsieur, if you care to visit my office. We might talk about the loss by evaporation—the equivalent of twenty-five thousand bottles a day—"

But Carell was now in a state of shock. He hung up. Pacing the room, he pushed rigid fingers through his hair. Now that he remembered how insistently Aristide Roulade had pressed his questions about cognac, he was certain they had been tests. By this time, no doubt, the police of Antwerp had telephoned the police of Cognac for a detailed description of Georges Carell. Perhaps they had already learned that the real Carell had been small and bald and lame. . . .

Within five minutes Carell was back at the telephone. Whether he was right or wrong about having been tricked last night, he could not afford to take chances. He called the airline.

"On Saturday's flight," he said, "I am booked from Antwerp all the way to Buenos Aires. Would it be possible for me to advance the date? Could—I fly today?"

"Today's flight leaves at twelve-thirty, Monsieur. In just two hours."

"Can you take me?"

"Let me see." There was silence for fully five minutes. Finally the voice came back: "Yes, Monsieur, there is a place. . . ."

Carell snatched his grips out of the closet. He worked in panic. The diamonds were already concealed in the linings; he packed his clothes faster than he had ever packed in his life.

At eleven the green-aproned

conciierge helped him load the bags into a taxi. Carell gave the man a generous tip. The cab sped off and he mopped sweat from his forehead.

After he had booked in at the airport he walked back and forth in front of the gate. It was five minutes past noon. He was thinking with a great deal of bitterness that if he had not brought Roulade that bottle, their talk might never have dealt with cognac.

He was still pacing when someone tapped his shoulder. Carell spun around. Two of the four men he faced were in civilian clothes, two in police uniform. One of them said: "You will come with us, monsieur."

Carell tried to look stupefied. "For— for what?"

"For attempting to abscond with forty parcels of diamonds."

At the beginning Carell had a wild impulse to bolt. But it was a futile thought. They put him and his grips into a car and drove him to the Prefecture.

There, Carell felt like an actor giving a performance for the members of the Diamond Dealers' Club. All those from whom he had attempted to steal diamonds were present to identify their parcels. And among them was the white-haired figure of Aristide Roulade.

The old man shook his head. He was the only one who spoke to Georges Carell. "You were foolish to do it, monsieur," he said.

Carell sank limply to a chair. "I was a fool," he answered, "when I let you trap me with questions about cognac."

Roulade seemed perplexed. "What has cognac to do with it? You were supposed to come to my office at eleven this morning. When you failed to come, I telephoned to ask if you had changed your plans. Your conciierge told me you had taken a cab to the airport. Enfin, everybody in the club knows you have many unpaid-for parcels. You could not be permitted to run away."

Carell was stunned. What Aristide Roulade was telling him was that he had not been defeated by his ignorance about cognac; he had been defeated by his panic.

"As for the cognac," the old man continued, "I know nothing about cognac except that I like it. The bottle you brought me was excellent."

Carell shut his eyes in pain. "It should have been," he groaned, "it cost me—a fortune."

THE END

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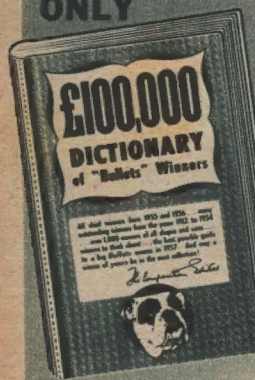
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£25: N. Day, 16 Brain Street, Glascoate Heath, Tamworth, Staffs: CALDER HALL—"GOLD MEDALLIST"—Atom Race.
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For ten winners of £3 see "Bullets" Bulletin. Further 80 cash prizes and 1,500 "Good Shots" have also been posted. (Tournament winner will be announced in earliest possible JOHN BULL.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries 6d. per *Bullet*. Make P.O. payable

to JOHN BULL, cross 1/8 Co., write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated February 16, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, February 2, for early news of *Bullets* No. 2,073 result.)

ADDRESS ENTRY: "Bullets" 2,073, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

POST this COUPON by MON., JAN. 21

EXAMPLE	6d.
BULLET	
EX.	6d.
B.	
EX.	6d.
B.	
EX.	6d.
B.	
EX.	6d.
B.	
EX.	6d.
B.	

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TONIGHT



you must sleep like a child

TONIGHT you must sleep deep, your mind surrendering to peace and tranquillity as your body rests. Tonight, Horlicks for you.

TONIGHT you must sleep warm. Cold sleep is uneasy sleep. Warm sleep restores and comforts. Tonight, Horlicks for you.

TONIGHT you must sleep like a child. Children know the secret of easy rest and you can find it again. Tonight, Horlicks for you.

TONIGHT you must sleep unaware of the night sounds that disturb shallow sleep. You'll wake revived when others are dozing and listless. For shallow sleep saps strength, but deep sleep feeds energy. Tonight, Horlicks for you.

TONIGHT HORLICKS FOR YOU